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Boosters, Bureaucrats, Politicians and Philanthropists: Coalition Building in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Daniel Smith Pierce
University of Tennessee - Knoxville

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Daniel Smith Pierce entitled "Boosters, Bureaucrats, Politicians and Philanthropists: Coalition Building in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in History.

James C. Cobb, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Paul H. Bergeron, Bruce Wheeler, Bobby Leggett

Accepted for the Council:
Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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BOOSTERS, BUREAUCRATS, POLITICIANS AND PHILANTHROPISTS: COALITION BUILDING IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Daniel Smith Pierce
December 1995

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to

Jean Bennett

who first instilled a love for history in an eleven year-old boy and who saw something special in him that even he did not see.

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ABSTRACT

The movement to establish a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee in the 1920s and 1930s was an exceedingly lengthy and complex process. In the seventeen years between the beginning of the park movement and the dedication of the park supporters had to overcome a number of serious obstacles: raising over $10 million during difficult economic times, purchasing over six thousand individual tracts of land, overcoming the resistance of well-financed opposition, and weathering the storms of political battles and economic depression that threatened the movement at almost every turn. In order to overcome the massive hurdles inherent in such a large and politically charged project park supporters were able to forge an effective coalition of public and private forces. Local booster groups such as the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association in Tennessee and Great Smoky Mountains, Inc. in North Carolina gave the movement tremendous enthusiasm and helped sell the idea of a national park, and its potential economic benefits, to the people of the region. The support of politicians in both states, swayed by both "business progressive" ideology and the popularity of the park movement, gave the movement credibility and at least part of the financial resources necessary to complete the project. The donation of $5 million by the Rockefeller family saved the project when it appeared as if it would fail. The ongoing interest of the Rockefeller Foundation helped insure the success of the project as its prodding, its influence at the highest levels of government and society, and its determination to see the movement through to completion kept the project moving.

Finally, the assistance of the federal government through the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service, the office of the president, and Congress provided the stability, the guidance, and the financial assistance that helped make the park a reality. With this cooperative effort public agencies and private groups provided a tremendous service to the nation and the region: establishing a national park that maintains a crucial wilderness area, provides recreational opportunities and enjoyment for millions of Americans, and at the same time yields important economic benefits for the region.

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INTRODUCTION

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is one of America's great natural treasures. In covering over 500,000 acres--the largest wilderness area East of the Mississippi River--the Smokies preserve an area of scenic wonder that includes highland meadows, waterfalls, clear mountain streams, and several of the highest mountains in the eastern United States. The park also protects one of the most biologically diverse regions in the nation that includes 130 species of trees--100,000 acres of the park contain virgin timber--65 ferns and fern allies, 230 lichens, 1800 fungi, 45 species of fish, 240 species of birds, and 66 species of mammals.[1] Because of its beauty and its proximity to the nation's population centers, the Smokies consistently rank first among national parks in the number of annual visitors, in 1994 almost doubling the attendance of the second ranking park, Grand Canyon National Park. In 1994 the 8.7 million visitors to the Smokies also generated approximately $689 million in consumer spending in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina, making it one of the most important, if not the most important, economic resources of the region.[2]

Despite the overall importance of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to the nation and the region, historical researchers have paid surprisingly little attention to the movement that led to its establishment. Carlos Campbell's *Birth of a National Park*

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[1]David Nevin, "Tranquility, Tourism--Trouble: The Great Smokies Have It All," *Smithsonian*, August 1993, 22.

[2]Michael Satchell, "Trouble in Paradise," *U.S. News & World Report*, 19 June 1995, 30-31.

in the Great Smoky Mountains provides the only book-length treatment of the subject.[3] However, Campbell's work is flawed in a number of ways. As an individual directly involved in the promotion of the park idea and of the park itself, Campbell tended toward the celebration of the park and of the people involved in the project. His work also focused on activities in and around Knoxville and neglected the efforts and input of individuals in North Carolina, the National Park Service, and those connected with the Rockefeller Foundation. In addition, Campbell's work relied primarily on his personal recollections of events and his personal evaluation of individuals and not on documentary sources. Other works, including Laura Thornborough's *The Great Smoky Mountains* and Michael Frome's *Strangers in High Places*, contain chapters on the establishment of the park but reflect many of the same biases as Campbell's work.[4]

Other shorter works have examined specific aspects of the establishment of the park. Four masters' students have produced theses on the history of the park, or on aspects of the park. Peter Givens's "Cataloochee and the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," and Jesse Lankford's "The Campaign for a National Park in Western North Carolina," provide some insights into the park movement in North Carolina and the impact of the park on some of the people in the area, but rely on sources available only in the immediate area.[5] John Thomas Whaley's "A Timely Idea at an Ideal

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[3]Carlos Campbell, *Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1960).

[4]Laura Thornborough, *The Great Smoky Mountains* (New York: Thomas Crowell Co., 1937); and Michael Frome, *Strangers in High Places*, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966).

[5]Peter Givens, "Cataloochee and the Establishment of the great Smoky Mountains National Park" (M.S. thesis, Western Carolina University, 1978); and Jesse Lankford, "The Campaign for a National Park in Western North Carolina" (M.A. thesis, Western

Time: Knoxville's Role in Establishing the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," although well researched and written, suffers from some of the same limitations.[6] The most thoroughly researched and most recent work is Margaret Lynn Brown's "Power, Privilege, and Tourism: A Revision of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Story."[7] However, Brown's work focuses primarily on the treatment accorded residents of the park who were forced to move when the park was created. In 1960 the *North Carolina Historical Review* published an article by Willard Gatewood on North Carolina's role in the establishment of the park, but the article primarily highlights the movement for the establishment of a national park in Western North Carolina in the early years of the twentieth century.[8]

All of these works give some insights into the establishment of the park, but none thoroughly covers the entire movement for a national park in the Smoky Mountains. In addition, none of these studies uses the rich documentary evidence available in the National Archives and at the Rockefeller Archive Center. Indeed, most previous works on the park did not utilize the wealth of archival material available at the park

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Carolina University, 1973).

[6]John Thomas Whaley, "A Timely Idea at an Ideal Time: Knoxville's Role in the Establishing of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1984).

[7]Margaret Lynn Brown, "Power, Privilege, and Tourism: A Revision of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Story" (M.A. thesis, University of Kentucky, 1990).

[8]Willard Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great smoky Mountains National Park", *North Carolina Historical Review* 37 (1960): 167-168.

headquarters.[9] These works also fail to put the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the proper historical context. The park movement grew out of, and was shaped by, political, social, and economic forces on the national, state and local level.

One of the major shortcomings of other works on the park has been their failure to put its establishment in the context of the scenic preservation movement of the early twentieth century. The initial interest of the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service in establishing parks east of the Mississippi River grew out of a desire by the newly formed Park Service to increase its power and influence in Washington and in the nation at-large. In addition, leaders in the national scenic preservation movement sought to broaden the appeal of the national park system so that it could be protected and even expanded. The so-called "See America First" campaign and its success in popularizing the national parks laid the groundwork for the establishment of national parks in the East.[10]

Earlier works on the Smokies also gave insufficient attention to the political context of the park movement.[11] The park movement grew out of the business progressive movement in North Carolina and Tennessee. Park boosters found natural allies in

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[9]Brown, "Power, Privilege, Tourism," provides the major exception.

[10]The best accounts of this period in the history of the National Park Service and the scenic preservation movement are Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987); Stephen Fox, *John Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1981); Robert Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks* (New York: Knopf, 1970); and Donald Swain, "The Passage of the National Park Service Act of 1916," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 50: 4-17.

[11]Whaley, "A Timely Idea at an Ideal Time," provides the most notable exception in his discussion of the business progressive influence on Knoxville park boosters.

business progressive politicians who emphasized the efficient use of natural resources and expansion of the public service responsibilities of government.[12] Political struggle within each state later shaped and molded the movement as factions within the Democratic Party in each state struggled for ascendancy.[13]

Previous historical research on the park has also avoided, or at least glossed over, the removal of individuals living in the park area. Those that do address this problem have done so in the context of accounts of Appalachian life and culture that have overemphasized the isolation of the region and the victimization of its inhabitants.[14] Recent research has demonstrated that the people of the Smokies were neither as isolated and disconnected from modern economic forces as earlier research would indicate, nor were they hapless victims of the modern industrial world.[15]

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[12]George B. Tindall, "Business Progressivism: Southern Politics in the Twenties," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 62 (1963): 92-106; and Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967).

[13]The political turmoil that dramatically influenced the park movement in the late 1920's and early 1930s is described in V.O. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949); David Lee, *Tennessee in Turmoil: Politics in the Volunteer State, 1920-1932* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979); Elmer Puryear, *Democratic Party Dissension in North Carolina, 1928-1936* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962); and Joseph T. Macpherson, "Democratic Progressivism in Tennessee: The Administration of Governor Austin Peay" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1969).

[14]Brown, "Power, Privilege, and Tourism," relies heavily on the work of Ronald Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982) which emphasizes the powerlessness of Appalachian people and their victimization by powerful industrialists.

[15]The works on Appalachian life and culture that give the best insights into the people of the Smokies are Crandall Shifflet, *Coaltowns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991); Durwood Dunn, *Cades Cove: The Life and Death of a Southern*

Other works understated the role of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and the Rockefeller Foundation in the park movement and provided little insight into why Rockefeller made such a magnanimous gift. Rockefeller's gift to the park movement grew out of two his major philanthropic interests, conservation and the South. He played a major role in the establishment or expansion of several national parks and participated in countless other conservation projects.[16] In addition he had an intense interest in the economic and social development of the southern United States. The Rockefeller family gave over one hundred million dollars to expand and develop educational opportunities in the region through the General Education Board and gave millions more to improve public health in the South through the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission to Eradicate Hookworm Disease.[17]

The early development of the park is another area that has received scant attention from researchers. Because of the lengthy process of establishment the Great Smoky Mountains National Park became a battlefield over the direction of development inside the park. This battle concerned the very mission of the Park Service. Would the

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Appalachian Community, 1818-1937 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988); and Florence Bush Cope, *Dorie: Woman of the Mountains* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992).

[16]For insights into Rockefeller's involvement with scenic preservation and the national parks see Runte, *National Parks*; Fox, *John Muir*; Raymond Fosdick, *John D. Rockefeller, Jr.: A Portrait* (New York: Harper, 1956); and Robert Righter, *Crucible for Conservation: The Creation of Grand Teton National Park* (Boulder: Colorado Associated University Press, 1982).

[17]For Rockefeller's involvement in the South see John Eppling, *The Germ of Laziness: Rockefeller Philanthropy and Public Health in the New South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981); and John Ensor Harr and Peter Johnson, *The Rockefeller Conscience: An American Family in Public and Private* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1991).

national parks serve primarily as great national "playgrounds" or would they function foremost as protectors of pristine wilderness areas? Franklin Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes played a key role in shaping a new ideology of development in the Smokies and within the Park Service.[18] As a result of this struggle early development in the park served as an important model within the national park system for the emphasis of wilderness protection over tourist services.

Earlier efforts have also failed to convey the complexity and uniqueness of the park movement. Establishment of the park involved developing an interest in scenic preservation among a people virtually ignorant of the concept, raising millions of dollars in one of the poorest regions of the country, purchasing over six thousand individual tracts of land and the removal of several thousand people from their homes and communities, struggling with five large timber companies who fought the park movement at every turn, coordinating the efforts of public and private groups in two states who were often at odds with each other, and dealing with political factionalism on the national, state, and local level that often threatened the very success of the project.

Most importantly, however, previous historical research missed the most important aspect of the establishment of the park, the cooperative nature of the venture. The movement to establish a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains combined the efforts of private citizens in North Carolina and Tennessee, the state governments of those two states, the wealth and influence of the Rockefeller family, and the direction and power of the federal government--including the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service, the Congress, and the Office of the President. Only through such a

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[18]Works that include accounts of this battle within the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior include Runte, *National Parks*; Fox, *John Muir*; and T.H. Watkins, *Righteous Pilgrim: The Life and Times of Harold Ickes, 1874-1952* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1990).

combination of forces and interests—an often tenuous coalition sometimes characterized more by petty jealousies and infighting than by the spirit of public service--could the park movement survive the serious challenges it encountered at every step of the way. Indeed, it was the strength of this coalition that gave the movement the ability to persevere over the seventeen long years that it took to finally establish the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

CHAPTER 1

A FIRM FOUNDATION

Although the successful movement to establish a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains began in 1923, the essential foundation for that movement was laid over the previous three decades. By 1923 a number of forces had converged that helped park boosters overcome the seemingly insurmountable odds in bringing a national park to the southern Appalachian region. First, early unsuccessful efforts at establishing national parks in the region had helped to create a favorable climate of opinion. Second, the establishment of the National Park Service, and the appointment of Stephen Mather as its first director, gave the scenic preservation movement new direction, energy, and focus. Third, the changing political climate in Washington, D.C., particularly the increased power of southerners in Congress made administrative agencies, the National Park Service and the Interior Department included, sensitive to gaining the approval and support of these powerful Congressmen. Fourth, the political climate in North Carolina and Tennessee changed and state government began to be dominated by "business progressives" who emphasized public services and efficiency were much more willing to spend state money on conservation projects than their predecessors.[1] Fifth, the development of affordable automobiles and the rise of automobile travel combined with "business progressive" politics gave rise to the "Good Roads" movement in the South. Like the railroads in the development of the western parks, the "Good Roads" movement

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[1] The term "business progressive" comes from George B. Tindall, "Business Progressivism: Southern Politics in the Twenties," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 57 (1963): 92-106.

played a key role in promoting the park idea in the Southern Appalachian region. Finally, the dramatic expansion of the timber industry in the Smokies in the early part of the twentieth century created an urgent need to protect the area and its virgin timber.

The earliest suggestions for the establishment of a national park in the Southern Appalachian mountains appear to have come in the 1880s. Purportedly Reverend C. D. Smith of Franklin, North Carolina advocated the establishment of such a park in an article published in a Waynesville, North Carolina newspaper in the early 1880s, although no documentation for this claim survives.[2] The first documented suggestion came in a paper delivered by Dr. Henry O. Marcy of Boston to the American Academy of Medicine on October 29, 1885. In supporting the idea of a national park in the mountains of Western North Carolina Dr. Marcy argued that:

> The pure air, water and climate hold out to a hopeful helpfulness to invalids from every land. The wise legislator, seeking far-reaching results, would do well to consider the advisability of securing, under state control, a large reservation of the higher ranges as a park. Its cost, at present would be merely nominal. Like the peaks and glaciers of Switzerland, its sanitary advantages would be of value incalculable to millions yet unborn.[3]

In the early 1890s the idea of a national park in the Southern Appalachian region received its first attention from a state legislature. In February 1893 the North Carolina State Legislature passed a resolution "requesting our Senators and Representatives in Congress to use their influence for the establishment of a national

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[2]George W. McCoy, *A Brief History of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Movement in North Carolina* (Asheville: Inland Press, 1940), 5, footnote 1. A copy of this short book was found at the North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill.

[3]Dr. Henry O. Marcy, "The Climatic Treatment of Disease: Western North Carolina as a Health Resort," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 5 (1885): 707.

park in Western North Carolina."[4] The "interests of science" provided the primary impetus behind this resolution. In April of the same year the North Carolina Press Association adopted a memorial to the United States Congress urging that it give the national park matter serious consideration. Later in the year, U.S. Representative John S. Henderson of Salisbury introduced the memorial into the House. However, nothing tangible came from this flurry of activity, and the idea of a national park in the region lay dormant for five years.[5]

Dr. Chase Ambler of Asheville, North Carolina organized the first major movement to promote the establishment of a national park in the southern Appalachian mountains. On a fishing trip in the mountains of Western North Carolina in June of 1899, with the help of his friend Judge William R. Day, Ambler developed a plan to start an organized drive to establish a national park in North Carolina. With the aid of A.H. McQuilkin, publisher of the magazine *Southern Pictures and Pencillings*, Ambler successfully lobbied the Asheville Board of Trade to form a Parks and Forestry Committee to promote the park idea. This committee organized a mass meeting held in November 1899 in Asheville to broadcast the advantages of a park in the area and invited leaders from all over the Southern Appalachian region to participate. The notables who attended included Locke Craig, future governor of North Carolina; U.S. Senator Marion Butler of North Carolina; U.S. Representative W.T. Crawford of North Carolina; Moses Cone of the Cone family of textile magnates; Josephus Daniels, editor of the Raleigh *News and Observer*; Charles A. Webb, editor of the Asheville *Citizen-Times*; M.V. Richards, land and industrial agent for the Southern Railroad; N.G. Gonzales, editor of the Columbia, South

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[4]McCoy, *A Brief History*, 6.

[5]Ibid., 6-8.

Carolina *State*; and Pleasant Stovall, editor of the Savannah *Press*.[6]

The speeches given at the meeting reflected a common concern throughout the South that the region had failed to get its fair share from the federal government. Locke Craig argued:

> It has been the policy of the government to establish parks from time to time, and it is remarkable that this mountain region of the South has heretofore been overlooked; for above all other sections it is an ideal country for a park. . . . it would be reckless stupidity, negligence of the grossest kind, if a portion of this grand and picturesque region be not preserved in its original, natural condition for the enjoyment of the people. . . . Other sections have their parks, why not the South?[7]

Craig also argued that the establishment of a national park in the South would symbolize the reconciliation of Civil War divisions between North and South. Senator Butler echoed Craig's thoughts: "If the government is going to have parks for all of us, then there should be one laid here. . . . The next park should be established in the east, and there is no place in the Appalachian range where you can find such a favorite region."[8]

The meeting resulted in the establishment of a permanent organization to continue to promote the park idea: the Appalachian National Park Association. Retired Asheville businessman George Powell was elected President of the organization and Chase Ambler Secretary-Treasurer. In its first official action the group sent a memorial to Congress requesting consideration of the establishment of a park in the region. The memorial contained a variety of arguments to justify the need for a national park in the area: "The rare natural beauty of the southern Appalachian region; the

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[6]Charles Dennis Smith, "The Appalachian National Park Movement, 1885-1901," *North Carolina Historical Review* 37 (1960): 46.

[7]Ibid., 13-14.

[8]Ibid., 15.

necessity of preserving the headwaters of many rivers rising in these mountains; the healthfulness of the region; the climate is fine the whole year; the location is central; the eastern states are entitled to a national park; the title to the land can be easily acquired."[9] In an argument that foreshadowed the future direction of the Appalachian National Park Committee, and the basic ignorance of many Americans of the difference between a national park and a national forest, or forest preserve, the memorial also argued that the park would produce a profit as a forest preserve.[10]

Despite the early enthusiasm of the participants in this meeting the movement for an Appalachian national park quickly ran out of steam. During the next two years several bills related to the establishment of national parks in the area were introduced into Congress. Although one bill resulted in a thorough survey of the region by the Forestry Bureau in the summer of 1900, and one bill requesting an appropriation of $5 million to establish a forest reserve in the Southern Appalachians passed the Senate in 1901, the national legislature took no substantive action.[11] In addition, the local movement experienced a great deal of difficulty in raising funds and in creating interest in the project outside of the immediate area. Increasingly lumber groups and utilitarian conservationists who believed in the "wise use" of the land began to dominate the organization. In 1901 the group changed its name to the Appalachian Forest Reserve Association. By 1905 the movement had run its course and on December 2 the Appalachian Forest Reserve Association turned over their membership rolls to the

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[9]McCoy, *A Short History*, 23-24.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid., 23-24.

American Forestry Association because "we have exhausted our resources in time, energy, and money and as many members are becoming pessimistic as to our success and the bulk of the work is devolving upon three or four men."[12]

Residents of East Tennessee were also exposed to many of these same ideas prior to 1923. Between 1910 and 1913 Knoxville hosted three large events designed to develop regional interest in conservation, particularly the protection of forests and watersheds, in conjunction with industrial and commercial development. The Appalachian Expositions of 1910 and 1911 were designed to "make known the wonderful natural resources of the Southern Appalachian section of the United States," promoted the area as an ideal site for industrial development. However, discussions of the conservation of these "wonderful natural resources" also found their place in these expositions. The most significant of these activities occurred in 1913 when Knoxville hosted the two-month long National Conservation Exposition. The *Knoxville Sentinel* advertised the exposition as: "An exposition with an idea behind it, designed to promote the highest development and best use of the natural resources of the country." Such luminaries as Helen Keller and Booker T. Washington visited the exposition. Most importantly the National Conservation Association, meeting at the exposition, endorsed a proposal calling for the establishment of a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains. However, no concrete action resulted from this recommendation.[13]

Despite the fact that the activities of the Appalachian National Park Association and the conservation expositions in Knoxville did not result in the establishment of a national park in the Great Smokies, they set the stage for the long process of establishing

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[12]Ibid., 30; and Smith, "Appalachian National Park Movement," 54-65.

[13]*Knoxville Sentinel*, 27 August 1913.

such a park. Most importantly, these projects exposed the people of Western North Carolina and East Tennessee to the idea and value of a national park in the region. In particular the promotional and political activities of the Appalachian National Park Association gave the park idea widespread acceptance among the general populace and among politicians in North Carolina. This gave North Carolina park boosters a distinct advantage in gaining statewide acceptance for national park projects in the 1920s. However, the Knoxville expositions planted an important seed in the minds of East Tennesseans: the compatibility of conservation, and even its value, to the interests of business and industry. This would later become the chief selling point for the park in the region.

The organizations established to promote the interests of conservation in both states also provided an early training ground for individuals who would later provide key leadership in the successful movement for a national park in the Smokies. Charles Webb and Josephus Daniels played active roles in the Appalachian National Park Association and later became the chief press advocates in North Carolina for a national park in the region in the 1920s.[14] Lawrence D. Tyson, future U.S. Senator from Tennessee and a park supporter in the '20s, served as President of the 1911 Appalachian Exposition. Ben Morton, mayor of Knoxville in the 1920s, served on the board of the 1913 National Conservation Exposition. David Chapman, who would become the most active and influential Tennessean in establishing the park, gained important exposure and experience while serving on the boards of the 1910 and 1911 Appalachian Expositions.[15]

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[14]Smith, "The Appalachian National Park Movement," 46.

[15]*Knoxville Sentinel*, 27 August 1913.

The changing nature of the scenic preservation movement and the resultant establishment of the National Park Service in 1916 also created a more favorable environment for the establishment of a national park in the Southern Appalachian region, especially within the federal government. For much of its early history the scenic preservation movement in the United States--which favored the setting aside of monumental natural wonders in a quest for national pride and cultural identity--participated in a heated turf battle with the more popular and politically stronger utilitarian conservationists--who favored "rational planning to promote efficient development and use of all natural resources."[16] The emotional and aesthetic arguments and justifications most often used by scenic preservationists, however, made it difficult for the movement to compete with the obvious economic benefits touted by utilitarian conservationists.[17]

The year 1912 proved to be a year of crisis for scenic preservationists, but one that helped make the movement stronger in the long run. The crisis came when the City of San Francisco petitioned the federal government for permission to flood the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park in order to create a much needed reservoir. Leading utilitarian conservationists like Gifford Pinchot favored the plan, as did the majority of the politicians in the region. Scenic preservationists like John Muir proved unable to mount an effective defense of the beautiful valley and of the crucial concept for scenic preservationists that once land had been preserved in a national park it should be

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[16]Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 2.

[17]Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987) gives an excellent account of the struggles between utilitarian conservationists and scenic preservationists.

protected inviolate. Congress approved the San Francisco petition and the damming and flooding of the valley proceeded.[18]

The Hetch Hetchy defeat came as an extremely damaging blow to scenic preservationists and threatened the safety and very existence of the national park system. However, scenic preservationists learned two valuable lessons from the experience. First, they learned that they needed their own advocate in the federal government, just as utilitarian conservationists had their advocates in the Forest Service. After the Hetch Hetchy defeat scenic preservationists redoubled their efforts to create a federal national parks bureau. Second, they learned that they needed to broaden the appeal of the movement; to come up with justifications and rationales that would appeal to a broader spectrum of the American people and rid the movement of its elite image. As national park historian Alfred Runte has argued, "if ever the cloud over the valley did have a silver lining, it was in teaching preservationists to rely on economic rationales for protection as well as the standard emotional ones."[19]

The solution to the problems of scenic preservationists came in the person of one man: Stephen Mather, a wealthy Chicagoan who had made his fortune in the borax industry. Mather brought both an enthusiasm for nature and the desire to sell scenic preservation to the American people just as strong as his earlier desire to sell them "Twenty Mule Team Borax." In 1915 Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane, tired of hearing complaints from Mather over the operation of the national parks, invited Mather to accept the position of Assistant Secretary of the Interior in charge of the national parks. Mather accepted, expecting to remain in government service only a few

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[18]Ibid., 77-81.

[19]Ibid., 83.

years, and immediately began to campaign for the creation of a national park bureau under the Department of Interior.[20]

While lobbying Congress to establish a park service, Mather also busied himself with revamping and revitalizing the national parks and their administration. He replaced most of the park superintendents and other political appointees in both the national parks and in his division of the Interior Department with able young men, "imbuing them with a distinctive esprit de corps and a firm dedication to the cause of natural beauty."[21] Mather also chose a young lawyer named Horace Albright to serve as his right-hand-man. Together these two began the task of solidifying the place of the national parks within the government and in the minds of the American people.[22]

In order to accomplish this task Mather began to implement an ambitious campaign to popularize and even romanticize the national parks. He persuaded Robert Sterling Yard--a former colleague at the *New York Sun*, former editor of *The Century Magazine*, the *Sunday New York Herald*, and the *Sunday New York Times*--to become publicity director for the parks and in an unusual arrangement paid him out of his own pocket. With war going on in Europe, Mather saw this as a perfect time to promote park visitation, particularly among American elites. Soon most of the leading magazines in the nation, including the *Saturday Evening Post* and *National Geographic*, ran articles extolling the beauties of America's national parks. Yard also wrote the immensely popular *National Parks Portfolio*, a book filled with photographs glorifying the wonders of the national

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[20]Donald Swain, "The Passage of the National Park Service Act of 1916," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 50 (1966): 4-17.

[21]Ibid., 17.

[22]Ibid, 4-17.

parks. Scribners published the book, but western railroads financed it and distributed copies free of charge to 275,000 leading Americans, including every member of Congress.[23]

Not only did the western railroads aid in the promotion of *National Parks Portfolio*, but they also launched their own highly successful advertising campaign promoting travel to the western national parks with the patriotic theme of "See America First." The railroad helped create the romantic image of both American national parks and of the western railroads that many Americans still share. "The western railroads," as Alfred Runte has asserted, "reached into the living rooms of the American public with the assurance that the anticipations of traveling did not lapse with the journey itself. Instead the lure of Yellowstone, Yosemite, Glacier, and the Grand Canyon transformed the passenger train into a magic carpet, a means to a larger and even more exciting end."[24]

In a remarkably short time Mather's labors and those of his young cohorts paid off. In 1916, despite the active opposition of the Forest Service and its parent agency the Agriculture Department, Congress created the National Park Service with Stephen Mather as its first director. The combination of the promotion of the national parks and the professionalization of the National Park Service made both overnight successes. The National Park Service quickly gained a reputation within the federal government for efficiency, enthusiasm, and dedication.[25] The number of visitors to national parks increased from 356,097 in 1916 to 1,280,886 in 1922. During the same period

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[23]Ibid.; and Runte, *National Parks*, 109-10.

[24]Runte, "Promoting Wonderland: Western Railroads and the Evolution of National Park Advertising," *Journal of the West* 31 (1992), 48.

[25]Swain, "National Park Service Act," 17.

congressional appropriations for the parks increased from $498,646.80 to $1,823,330.[26]

The success of the National Park Service and the national parks had important implications for supporters of national parks in the Southern Appalachian region. The success of the western parks in attracting visitors made civic boosters in every region of the nation eager to have a park in their backyard. Southern boosters, who always looked for ways to promote regional economic growth, paid especially close attention to the success of the national parks. This greatly strengthened the position of the Park Service within the federal government so that it could now protect existing parks. In addition, Congress, "confronted with evidence the parks were capable of paying economic as well as emotional dividends," began to look for ways to expand the national park system rather than destroy it.[27]

However, the early success of the National Park Service gave Stephen Mather no allusions concerning the continued strength of the agency. He knew that he would have to continue to strengthen his agency's position within the federal government as new battles for congressional funding of existing parks and new parks and the ongoing conflict with utilitarian conservationists in the Forest Service loomed. This gave the cause of southern park boosters even greater strength as the dramatic increase in power within Congress of southern Representatives and Senators coincided with the creation of the National Park Service.

The power of southern Representatives and Senators began to grow dramatically in

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[26]Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1923 and the Travel Season, 1923* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1923), 5.

[27]Runte, *National Parks*, 105.

the late teens and early twenties as southern states returned the same men to Washington year after year. Political scientist V.O. Key observed this phenomenon in his classic work *Southern Politics in State and Nation*:

> The re-election of individual Senators and Representatives over long periods wins a special advantage for the South through the workings of the seniority principle. Southern voters have a keen awareness of the benefit accruing from long congressional service and the challenger of an elder statesman cannot easily persuade the electorate that young blood is preferable to seniority on committees and in congressional leadership.[28]

Southern Representatives and Senators also practiced a higher degree of cohesiveness in their voting than any other group in Congress at this time. Although this primarily related to issues concerning the racial status quo in the South, these practices made southerners a group worth wooing.[29]

Stephen Mather recognized this fact early on, particularly as southern Representatives and Senators had often provided key opposition to legislation relating to federal involvement in conservation issues. Some southerners opposed the acquisition of land by the federal government for any purpose as a violation of states' rights. Representative Charles L. Bartlett argued in a 1908 House Judiciary Committee hearing that the setting aside of land in the Appalachian and White Mountains for federal forest reserves signaled the death of federalism, and broke down all barriers to congressional power. If Congress approved this action then "the old American idea of the sovereign State with independent and sovereign duties to be performed to its own citizens, has

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[28] V.O. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949; reprint, Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 345.

[29] Ibid., 349-55 and 370-73.

become but a dream of past generations."[30]

Southern Democrats also possessed a penchant for allying with midwestern and western Republicans against conservation legislation based on the issue of property rights, as well as potential economic damage to affected areas. In considering the same issue as the House Judiciary Committee in 1909, five members of the House Agriculture Committee, three Republicans from the Midwest and West and two southern Democrats, issued a minority report protesting committee approval of the bill:

> The very best that can be said in support for the federal purchase of these lands is that as a result of such purchase the impairment of navigable streams may possibly be diminished or retarded. But will this vague general possibility, or probability, of a distant and shadowy good offset the immediate and certain evil of driving large numbers of people away from homes which in many instances have been occupied for generations, of reducing the productivity of large areas, and of large amounts of property from local tax rolls?[31]

The best example of the impact of southern Representatives and Senators on issues directly related to the national parks concerned the Hetch Hetchy bill. In both the House and the Senate the decisive votes in favor of allowing the City of San Francisco to flood the valley came from southerners.[32] These votes, however, reflected not so much hostility to the idea of national parks, but a profound indifference. What good did national parks, the vast majority located in western states, do for them or their

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[30]Congress, House, Committee on the Judiciary,*Hearing on House Resolution 208*, 60th Cong., 2nd sess., 33.

[31]Congress, House, Committee on Agriculture, *Hearings before the Committee on Agriculture on Bills Having for their Object the Acquisition of Forest and Other Lands for the Protection of Watersheds and Conservation of Navigable Streams*, 60th Cong., 2nd sess.,131. The five dissenting members of the committee included: Charles F. Scott, R-Kansas; William Lorimer, R-Illinois; George W. Cook, R-Colorado; Jack Beall, D-Texas; and W.W. Rucker, D-Missouri.

[32]Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 175-80.

constituents? The attitude of most southerners in Congress was best reflected in the comments of Senator James A. Reed of Missouri when he observed during the Hetch Hetchy debate:

> It seems to me that if this is not a case of "much ado about nothing," it surely is a case of much ado about little. The Senate of the United States has devoted a full week of time to discussing the disposition of about 2 square miles of land located at a point remote from civilization in the very heart of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and possessing an intrinsic value of probably not to exceed four or five hundred dollars. The great national park in which the paltry 2 square miles is embraced contains, I am informed, over 1,100 square miles of territory. It is merely proposed to put water on these 2 square miles. Over that trivial matter the business of the country is halted, the Senate goes into profound debate, the country is thrown into a condition of hysteria, and one would imagine that chaos and old night were about to descend upon the land.[33]

For Mather, and the National Park Service, the establishment of national parks in the South would help turn uninterested, and even hostile, southern Representatives and Senators into supporters of the fledgling agency. By the early 1920s the Park Service's successful promotion of the economic benefits of national parks had resulted in a heightened interest among civic boosters and politicians in the South. Bills to establish national parks in the Mammoth Cave area of Kentucky and in the Shenandoah Mountains of Virginia had already received committee consideration by Congress by the early 1920s.[34] By 1923 Mather's eyes increasingly looked south as the logical place, especially in terms of political value, for expansion of the national park system.

Another political change, this time on the state level, helped set the stage for expansion of the national park system into the South: the rise of a political movement known as business progressivism. The Republican-controlled Congress of the early

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[33] *Congressional Record*, 63rd Congress, 2nd Session, 6 December 1913, 362.

[34] Robert Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), 172.

1920s had made it clear that no land for national park purposes could be purchased using federal funds. Any such lands would have to be purchased by the states and donated to the federal government.[35]

The idea of national parks, particularly as presented by Stephen Mather and the Park Service publicity machine, appealed to the business progressive mentality. Business progressives maintained the progressive tenets of efficiency and expansion of the public service responsibilities of government, while downplaying the democratic, business regulatory, and social justice aspects of the progressive spirit. A national park would not only conserve and protect crucial resources needed for business and industrial development in the region, but also would promote business in its own right. In addition, with the publicity national parks were receiving at the time the region would receive a great deal of national exposure, promoting both tourism and business expansion into the region.[36]

Of all southern states during the 1920s, North Carolina possessed the strongest business progressive credentials. During the 1920s the state became known as the "Wisconsin of the South" for its progressive state government. Governors Cameron Morrison and Angus W. McLean led the way as the state developed extensive government programs in education, public health, and welfare. In the process North Carolina rejected traditional southern reticence toward taxation and government spending. Indeed, taxes increased 554% between 1913 and 1930, while state expenditures increased by 847% between 1915 and 1925. North Carolina ranked tenth among all states in government expenditures, fourth in state debt, and second in per capita debt in

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[35]*Report of the Director NPS, 1923*, 5.

[36]Tindall, "Business Progressivism," 92-106.

1925. This new attitude toward government in North Carolina--as Governor Angus McLean put it, "administration characterized by efficiency, economy, and rational progress"--would prove highly beneficial as national park supporters began to seek state support for the park project and state funds to buy park land.[37]

Tennessee shared North Carolina's business progressive zeal. The 1920s in Tennessee were dominated by the three administrations of Austin Peay--"Peay for Progress"--the quintessential business progressive governor. During his administrations Peay worked to improve the efficiency of the state government, improve and expand public education, and overhaul the state tax system. Despite his calls for improved government efficiency in order to save money, like his North Carolina counterparts, Peay dramatically increased both taxes and government spending. Peay also brought strong conservationist tendencies to the governor's office, another factor that would prove beneficial to Tennessee park boosters.[38]

One other aspect of business progressivism--the "Good Roads" movement--did perhaps the most to create a favorable environment for national parks in North Carolina and Tennessee. During the 1920s the issue of good roads became one of the primary political and civic issues in the region. Historian Francis B. Simkins called good roads the "third god in the trinity of Southern progress" accorded the same enthusiasm as educational and industrial projects.[39] Many southerners saw good roads as the long-sought panacea that would stimulate regional economic development and finally put the

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[37]Ibid., 97-98.

[38]Ibid., 100-1.

[39]Francis Butler Simkins, *The South, Old and New: A History, 1820-1947* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), 374.

South in the national economic mainstream. "Good Roads" boosters touted increased tourism as one of the chief benefits that their program would bring to the South. As the price of automobiles plummeted and automobile ownership soared in the South--the number of registered automobiles in the region increased from approximately 25,000 in 1915 to 146,000 in 1920--the demand for good roads also dramatically increased.[40]

The good roads issue became a powerful political issue in both North Carolina and Tennessee in the 1920s. Under the administration of highway commissioner Frank Page, North Carolina developed a state-wide system of hard-surfaced highways. Between 1921 and 1925 the state built 7,500 miles of highway, with all of the main routes hard-surfaced, connecting all one hundred county seats. In 1920 Tennessee only possessed 500 miles of surfaced roads. Under the leadership of Austin Peay this number expanded to 5000 by 1929.[41]

The prospect of good roads, or any roads for that matter, held a particularly strong appeal for the virtually roadless regions of Western North Carolina and East Tennessee. However, the expense of road building in the mountains kept road building to a minimum even during the halcyon days of the 1920s. Good roads boosters knew that if a national park was established in the region good roads, possibly even financed by the federal government, would follow. As such they often led the way in local promotion of the park idea.

Involvement in the "Good Roads" movement in Western North Carolina and in East

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[40]Howard Lawrence Preston, *Dirt Roads to Dixie: Accessibility and Modernization in the South, 1885-1935* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 41 and 164.

[41]Tindall, "Business Progressivism," 99-101.

Tennessee almost guaranteed that an individual would be involved in the promotion of national parks in the region. Joseph Hyde Pratt, who became known as one of the leading good roads proponents in the South during his tenure as North Carolina state geologist from 1906-1917, led the early drive to bring a national park to Western North Carolina.[42] The chief park boosters in East Tennessee, W.P. Davis and David Chapman, both served on the board of directors of the East Tennessee Automobile Club. Other park boosters--including pioneer automobile dealers Claude Reeder and Cowan Rodgers, and Russell Hanlon, secretary-manager of the ETAC--also had strong good roads credentials. Good roads and national parks were especially bound together in East Tennessee. The ETAC and the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association--chief park booster group in East Tennessee--shared office space and the same board of directors. As Russell Hanlon remembered, "it was often difficult to determine which group was meeting."[43] However, it did not really matter as the goals of both groups--area economic development, good roads, and increased tourism--proved to be the same.

The arrival of large-scale commercial timbering operations in the Smokies in the early part of the twentieth century produced perhaps the greatest impetus--although completely unintentional--for the establishment of a national park in the region. The potential deforestation of the region by the timber companies, particularly the destruction of the last large stands of virgin timber east of the Mississippi River, helped give the park movement a sense of urgency.

Although "peripheral logging" had been going on in the Smokies since the 1880s the small scale and the focus on particular valuable varieties of timber--black walnut,

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[42]Preston, *Dirt Roads*, 25; and *The Asheville Citizen*, 4 August 1924.

[43]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 17.

cherry, ash--posed little threat to the stands of virgin timber in the upper reaches of the Smokies. However, with the upturn in the economy in the early twentieth century combined with the depletion of timber resources in the North and in more accessible regions of the South, the Smokies began to attract the attention of larger, better capitalized operators. On the North Carolina side of the Smokies the completion of the Asheville-to-Murphy branch of the Southern Railway and the construction of the pulp mills of the Champion Fibre Company at Canton, North Carolina created a very favorable environment for timber operators. Champion provided an important market for timber by-products, making timber operations in the Smokies much more efficient.[44]

The Little River Lumber Company established the first major timber operation in the Smokies in 1901. This Philadelphia-based corporation purchased over 70,000 acres of land in the Little River watershed that extended from its base of operations and mill at Townsend, Tennessee to the top of Clingman's Dome on the North Carolina/Tennessee line. By 1908 the company had completed construction of eighteen miles of standard gauge railroad from Townsend through the Little River Gorge to its primary timber camp on the East Prong of Little River at Elkmont. The company also constructed a number of temporary spur lines along tributaries of Little River, and even used incline railroads on especially steep grades.[45]

Other corporations soon followed. Champion not only built its pulp mill in Canton, but also became the single largest landholder in the Smokies with over 90,000 acres in Tennessee and North Carolina. Another Philadelphia firm, William Whitmer and Sons,

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[44]Robert S. Lambert, "Logging the Great Smokies, 1880-1930," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 21 (1961): 350-63.

[45]Lambert, "Logging on Little River, 1890-1940," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 33 (1961): 32-43.

bought 33,000 acres near the Cherokee Indian Reservation in 1909, and the Morton Butler Timber Company of Chicago purchased over 30,000 acres of land in the Tennessee Smokies in 1912. By the early twenties the Suncrest Lumber Company, Norwood Lumber Company, W.M. Ritter Lumber Company and the Montvale Lumber also held sizable acreage in the Smokies.[46]

All of these companies--with the exception of Morton Butler whose land remained virgin timber until it was sold to become part of the national park--began active timber operations on their property. These included the construction of mills and the establishment of timber camps at such places as Smokemont, Crestmont, and Ravensford in North Carolina, and Elkmont and Tremont in Tennessee. Most companies set up double-band sawmills capable of cutting 70,000 to 80,000 board feet per day, as well as planing and lath mills, machine shops, and kilns for drying the lumber. At the timber camps, the companies built housing for employees, commissaries, and in some camps, schools and community buildings. Residents of Tremont called their community building the house of "salvation, education, and hell fire and damnation," because it served as a combination church, school, and movie house. The companies also made extensive capital investment in spur railroads that penetrated into the far reaches of places like Fish Camp Prong and Meigs, Jakes, Deep, and Forney's Creeks. At the peak of lumbering activity during World War I over 200 miles of railroad track crisscrossed the Smokies.[47]

Because of this extensive capital investment timber companies used the most efficient means possible in harvesting their timber. The companies employed overhead steam

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[46]Lambert, "Logging the Great Smokies," 360-61.

[47]Ibid.

skidders in the steep terrain to haul timber as far as 3000 feet to the railroad line for loading onto flatcars. Although this process seemed efficient, it proved extremely shortsighted as the process of dragging the mature timber out destroyed many of the younger trees. Such operations denuded the mountainsides and made them subject to soil erosion and fire. The rapid deforestation of the Smokies--the Little River Lumber Company alone reportedly averaged cutting over 22,000,000 board feet a year in the late twenties--made their preservation as a national park an especially critical matter for many park proponents.[48]

The coming of commercial timber operations also spurred the move to establish a national park in the Smokies by exposing tourists and summer cottage owners to the beauties of the region. Railroads originally built to transport timber out of the Smokies soon began to transport tourists into the mountains. By 1915 resort hotels had sprung up along the Little River Railroad at Kinzel Springs, Sunshine, and Elkmont.[49] The elite of Knoxville also organized two resort clubs near Elkmont: the Appalachian Club in 1910, and the Wonderland Club in 1914. Both clubs contained summer cottages, clubhouses, recreation facilities, and hotel facilities.[50] In 1916 Andy Huff built the

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[48]Ibid., 357-63; and Lambert, "Logging on Little River," 39-42.

[49]Advertising brochure for Little River Railroad, Vertical File, Great Smoky Mountains National Park Library (hereafter GSMNP Library), Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

[50]John Ogden Morrell, "A Brief History of the Appalachian Club and Wonderland Club Within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," John Ogden Morrell Papers, Great Smoky Mountains National Park Archives (hereafter GSMNP Archives), Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

Mountain View Hotel in Gatlinburg, Tennessee.[51] John Oliver began renting tourist cabins in Cades Cove in 1924.[52] Railroad development also attracted growing numbers of tourists to Bryson City, North Carolina and the nearby Cherokee Indian Reservation. By the early 1920s the increasing profitability of the tourist trade in the Smokies combined with the threat to the scenery from timber operations, gave great impetus to the national park movement.

By 1923 a firm foundation on which a national park in the region could be built had been laid. Both states had been exposed to the idea of a national park in their mountainous areas through the early unsuccessful attempts to promote regional national park development. Many of the leaders of the successful movement of the 1920s gained valuable experience through their involvement in these early efforts. The federal government had installed a permanent advocate for scenic preservation, and for the first time in many years was prepared to expand the national park system. At the same time the rise of the one-party system of politics had placed southern Representatives and Senators in increasingly powerful positions within Congress, making the South a particularly attractive area for national park expansion as the Park Service sought to improve its standing and funding within the federal government. The rise of business progressivism--most notably its adjunct, the "Good Roads" movement--created a favorable climate in both North Carolina and Tennessee for the expenditure of public funds on a national park project. Finally, the threat to the scenic beauty of the Smokies brought by the introduction of large-scale commercial timbering operations gave park

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[51]Ed Trout, *Gatlinburg: Cinderella City* (Sevierville: Griffin Graphics, 1984), 81.

[52]Durwood Dunn, *Cades Cove: The Life and Death of a Southern Appalachian Community, 1818-1937* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988), 243.

supporters an important emotional issue on which to build. All of these forces converged in 1923 laying the foundation for the cooperative effort necessary for the successful completion of such a large and complex environmental project.

CHAPTER 2

A NATIONAL PARK IN THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN REGION

The successful movement to establish a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains began with a series of events in 1923 that built on the foundation laid over the previous years. Over a one-and-one-half-year period the National Park Service and the Interior Department publicly endorsed the idea of national parks in the East and formed a special committee to investigate possible sites. Park boosters in North Carolina and Tennessee also formed groups to promote the establishment of national parks in the region. These groups championed a variety of sites, especially in North Carolina, and often competed for the attention of the Park Service and the Interior Department's special committee. The climax of the period came when Congress passed a bill to launch a special investigation of the Smokies to assess its suitability as a national park site. In this one-and-one-half-year period the Smokies movement progressed from the fantasy of a handful of people in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina to a well organized, though still fledgling, project with steadily increasing prospects for success.

The most important event of 1923 for the Smokies came with the publication of the Director of the National Park Service's annual report. On the fourteenth page of the report Director Stephen Mather made a fateful statement when he declared: "I should like to see additional national parks established east of the Mississippi, but just how this can be accomplished is not clear."[1]

Mather's statement expressed his desire, and that of other Park Service officials, to

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[1] *Report of the Director of the NPS, 1923,* 14.

gain control of what had become a rather chaotic situation. By the summer of 1923 Mather and the Park Service's promotion of the national parks had succeeded almost too well. Bill after bill had been introduced to Congress to establish new parks with little or no input from the National Park Service. Most of these unsolicited bills originated from southern Senators and Representatives. In the first half of 1923 alone legislators submitted bills for the creation of an Appalachia National Park in Virginia and a Lincoln National Park in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia.[2] In preceding years Congressmen had introduced bills to establish parks at Mammoth Cave in Kentucky and at Grandfather Mountain in North Carolina.[3] Mather unquestionably wanted to expand the national parks system and recognized the value of adding new national park supporters among this increasingly powerful group of Senators and Representatives, but he also wanted a process where the Park Service, not politicians, controlled the addition of new parks.

While the pressure to establish new parks increased, Mather faced pointed criticism from his old friend Robert Sterling Yard. In 1918 new government regulations had forced Mather to end the practice of paying Yard his $5000 annual salary out of his pocket. With Mather's financial support Yard established the National Parks Association with the objective of defending "the National Parks and National Monuments fearlessly against the assaults of private interests and aggressive commercialism."[4]

As Executive Secretary of the National Parks Association, Yard became a zealous--some would say overzealous--defender of his particular view of "national park standards." Yard feared that if the Park Service lowered its standards then every

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[2]Ibid., 84.

[3]Shankland, *Steve Mather*, 172.

[4]Ibid.,167.

Senator or Representative would jump on the bandwagon to gain a national park for his constituency. This flood of new parks would divert crucial funds from the already established parks. Yard warned that a "National Park Pork Barrel would be the final degradation." He continued by addressing the question of national parks in the East:

> One argument for these gift-enterprise parks is that we should have National Parks in the east. We should indeed! Until our System represents also the supreme magnificence of our eastern landscape, it will be incomplete. Several National Parks should represent the glory of our Appalachians; but in magnificence of included scenery, in variety, in scientific importance and in ample spaciousness, these parks must do justice to the National Parks System. None but the noblest examples, painstakingly chosen, must be admitted.[5]

Yard and the National Parks Association became highly critical of any parks project that they believed compromised the high standards of scenic monumentalism on which the national park system had been established.[6]

These pressures intensified in the aftermath of Mather's 1923 annual report. In order to expand the national park system into the East, while maintaining control of the process and maintaining some sort of standard for national parks, Mather began discussions in late 1923 with Secretary of the Interior Hubert Work on the best way to approach the problem. On January 2, 1924 Work issued a press release giving a first glimpse into his and Mather's proposed solution:

> The existing National Park system is the finest in the world. In making any additions to it sites should be chosen that will be in every respect up to the standard, dignity, and prestige of the existing National Parks and National Monuments. A thorough study, therefore, will be necessary before any definite

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[5]Robert Sterling Yard, "Gift-Parks the Coming National Park Danger," *National Parks Bulletin* 4 (1923): 4-5.

[6]Runte, *National Parks*, 218-20.

conclusion may be reached.[7]

In further discussions Mather and Work decided to create a special investigating committee to examine possible national park sites. They also decreed that this investigation would exclusively involve the southern Appalachian region and would only extend as far north as the southern border of Pennsylvania.[8]

By February, 1923 plans began to crystallize as Mather and Work contacted individuals best capable of conducting such a study. They decided that the group would include no southerners so as to prevent any accusations of favoritism that might taint recommendations made by the committee. Representative Henry W. Temple of Pennsylvania, a former professor of history and political science at Washington and Jefferson College and an avid preservationist, agreed to chair the committee. Mather also received permission from the U.S. Geological Survey to allow topographic engineer Colonel Glenn S. Smith to serve on the committee because of his familiarity with the region.[9] Major W.A. Welch, general manager and chief engineer of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission of New York, was added to the group because of his experience with state parks and his contacts with eastern philanthropists. Work asked the Council on National Parks, Forests and Wild Life--an umbrella organization composed of representatives of the leading conservation organizations in the East--to choose two of its members to round out the committee. The Council chose New Jersey

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[7]"Department of the Interior Memorandum for the Press," 2 January 1924, Box 1147, File 870-1, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79, National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter NA), Washington, D.C.

[8]Hubert Work to William J. Harris, 18 March 1924, Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[9]Stephen Mather, "Memorandum for the Secretary of the Interior," 9 February 1924, Box 1147, File 870-1, RG 79, NA.

railroad-car manufacturer and longtime national park supporter William C. Gregg, and Harlan P. Kelsey of Massachusetts, a former president of the Appalachian Mountain Club, one of the oldest preservation groups in the nation.[10]

The committee held its first meeting at the Interior Department, March 26-27, 1924. Secretary Work welcomed and thanked the committee for its willingness to serve and challenged them to "undertake a thorough study of the Southern Appalachian Mountains for the purpose of selecting the most worthy site in that range as a national park, in order to conserve the scenery and the plant and animal life under the established national park policies for the use and education of the people."[11]

The committee went immediately to work, first addressing the issue of how to respond to letters, already pouring in, asking the committee to inspect a particular site. The committee decided to prepare a form letter and questionnaire to send to prospective communities in order to collect as much data as possible before they conducted field visits. The questionnaire asked for information on natural boundaries of the proposed park; minimum and maximum altitude; special features such as mountain peaks, cliffs, gorges, waterfalls, caverns, and varieties of plant and animal life; improvements to the area such as towns, factories, mines, farms, quarries, and hydroelectric dams; size of holdings in the area; extent of area that had been lumbered or burned over; and the amount of assistance that might be expected from gifts. The committee also decided to send out a circular entitled "A Policy for National and State Parks, Forests, and Game

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[10]United States Department of the Interior, *Final Report of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission to the Secretary of the Interior, June 30, 1931* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1931), 1.

[11]"Department of the Interior Memorandum for the Press," 26 March 1924, Box 1147, File 870-1, RG 79, NA.

Refuges," giving the general qualifications for inclusion in the National Park system. Next the committee tackled the issue of officially naming the committee. The group unanimously agreed on the name, Southern Appalachian National Park Committee. Committee members also approved a resolution that as a matter of policy at least a sub-committee of the main committee would visit each proposed site. In a final action, Harlan Kelsey offerred to send each member of the committee a copy of Horace Kephart's book, *Our Southern Highlanders*--erroneously recorded in the minutes as *Our Southerland Highlanders*--a book about Kephart's experiences in the Smoky Mountains of North Carolina. Kelsey argued that the book "contained the truest description of this area available."[12]

A variety of responses ensued from the establishment of the committee, including a somewhat hostile reaction from the Forest Service, chief rivals of the National Park Service in the federal government. Secretary of Agriculture Henry C. Wallace wrote a lengthy letter to Senator George Norris, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, defending his turf and explaining that, in his opinion, the southern Appalachian region did not meet national park standards:

> The region is totally different from that in which the National Park System was conceived and developed. It has been extensively lumbered and the remaining areas of virgin forest are for the most part small and scattered. It is a region of relatively large industrial development maintained by the use of forest products. It is a region in which other uses of the mountains for such purposes as municipal water supply, power development and the like are relatively common and increasing in normal and necessary demand. Local mountain settlements, even in the more rugged portions are numerous.[13]

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[12]"Minutes of the Preliminary Meeting of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee," 26-27 March 1924, Box 1147, File 870-1, RG 79, NA.

[13]Henry C. Wallace to George Norris, 24 April 1924, Governor Austin Peay Papers (hereafter Peay Papers), Box 84, File 1, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville (hereafter TSLA).

Wallace continued that the Forest Service could easily protect the "dozens of small areas of special interest, beauty or adaptability to recreational use," such as Mt. Mitchell, Grandfather Mountain, Linville Gorge, or the Pink Beds in North Carolina, the crests of the Smokies in Tennessee and North Carolina, and the Toccoa Basin of North Georgia. In an obvious dig at the National Park Service, he further argued that "the National Forest system of protection with varied use seems better adapted to the situation herein set forth than the National Park system of preservation coupled with prohibition of all but museum use."[14]

Communities in the southern Appalchian region, however, responded much more enthusiastically than did Wallace and the Forest Service. The Department of Interior received letters from Knoxville, Jonesboro, Chattanooga, Elizabethton, Johnson City, and Cleveland in Tennessee; Louisville, Mammoth Cave, and Clay City, Kentucky; Asheville, Linville, Bakersville, and Wilmington in North Carolina; Staunton, Wise County, Big Knob, and Harrisonburg in Virginia; Morganton, Berkeley Springs, and Caanan Valley in West Virginia; and Atlanta and Tallulah Park, Georgia touting potential national park sites.[15] To be sure, organization had begun well before the creation of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee in many areas to boost the establishment of national parks in the southern Appalachian region.

The park movement in Knoxville began almost immediately after the publication of Mather's annual report. On their return from a trip to the western parks in the summer of 1923, Ann Davis reportedly asked her husband, W.P. Davis: "Why can't we

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[14]Ibid.

[15]Congress of the United States, "Memorandum for the Press," 27 March 1924, Box 1147, File 870-1, RG 79, NA.

have a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains? They are just as beautiful as these mountains."[16] W.P. Davis immediately took the establishment of a national park in the Smokies as his personal cause, and brought his considerable enthusiasm and energy to bear on making such a park a reality. As general manager of the Knoxville Iron Company and as a member of the boards of directors of both the Knoxville Automomobile Club and the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce, Davis had the wealth and influence to be heard on the issue in the Knoxville area.[17]

On September 17, 1923 W.P. Davis wrote to Secretary of Interior Hubert Work urging him to look into the possibility of establishing a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee. Work responded that two important things had to be considered before a national park could be established in the area, "first, whether the area in fact is suitable from a scenic standpoint for national park purposes, and, secondly, if that is established affirmatively, how it can be acquired by the United States."[18]

Davis began actively seeking local support for the project, talking to anyone who would listen about his dream of a national park in the Smokies. On October 22, 1923 Davis took his idea to the directors of the Knoxville Automobile Club and a special

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[16]Mrs. Davis's words are recorded in most accounts of the establishment of the Park, including Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 13; and Michael Frome, *Strangers in High Places*, 182; the quote used was taken from "Excerpts of Directors' Meetings of the Knoxville Automobile Club: History of the Creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," Box XII, File 12, Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association Papers (hereafter GSMCA Papers), GSMNP Archives. The most thorough assessment of Knoxville's role in the establishment of the park can be found in Whaley, "A Timely Idea at an Ideal Time."

[17]Lucille Deaderick, ed., *Heart of the Valley: A History of Knoxville, Tennessee* (Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1976), 515-16.

[18]Hubert Work to W.P. Davis, 28 September 1923, Box 2012, File 12-22, Records of the Department of the Interior, R G 48, NA.

committtee was formed to pursue the project in conjunction with a like committee appointed by the Knoxville Board of Commerce. For the later part of 1923 the committee called itself the Smoky Mountain Forest Reserve Association. In January of 1924, however, the committee removed forest reserve from its name and became the Smoky Mountain Conservation Association.[19]

The motivations of the Knoxville park boosters were clear from the start and had little to do with traditional notions of scenic preservaton. In discussing the formation of the special committee the *Knoxville Sentinel* argued that the establishment of a national park in the area "will bring millions of extra dollars into the southland." These millions would come from the tourists who would flock to the region, particularly those tourists headed to Florida. The article continued by discussing another potential benefit: "With the establishment of a national park in the Appalachian region, roads would be built and maintained by the government, thus eliminating drawbacks offered motoring tourists." The article also pointed out that tourists had spent $100 million in the previous year in the areas surrounding national parks. In an argument that demonstrated the ignorance of most people in the region concerning national park rules and regulations, and of actual conditions in the over-hunted Smokies, the paper argued that, "no better place is offered for a National park than the Smoky Mountains, rich in scenery, pioneer history and hunting."[20]

While boosting the park idea and the economic benefits that it would bring to the region, Davis also began to collect information on the scenic value of the Smoky Mountains necessary to convince the government that the area deserved inclusion in the

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[19]The name change is reflected in a change in letterhead on letters in Box 305, File 601, RG 79, NA.

[20]*Knoxville Sentinel*, 10 October 1923.

national park system. In October of 1923 Davis wrote to Wiley Brownlee, a locally prominent developer and manufacturer who lived in the Smokies near Gatlinburg, Tennessee, asking for a description of the mountains, with a particular focus on aspects that would make them attractive to the National Park Service. Brownlee replied that this "would require the efforts of three or four poets to describe the beauties of these mountains." Brownlee went on to tout the Smokies as "the largest body of highlands in the entire Appalachian range," containing "dense masses of luxurious flora," with "inumerable springs, brooks, creeks, and rivers; litterally [sic] thousands of miles of speckled trout, rainbow, and bass," and all of this "within a days [sic] journey from all large cities east of the Mississippi River." Brownlee concluded by adding: "If there is any section East of the Mississippi that can measure up to National park standards, the Smokies are unquestionably it."[21]

Davis also worked to gain key support for the project from local politicians. By January he had secured the support of local U. S. Representative J. Will Taylor, the dominant Republican political figure in Tennesse, and Tennessee U. S. Senator John Shields. These connections paid off early as Davis recieved an audience with Secretary Work and some unnamed members of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee in early February 1924, over a month before the first official meeting of the committee.[22] Late in the spring Senator Shields introduced a bill into the Senate entitled, "A bill to establish the Smoky Mountain National Park, and for other purposes" (67th Cong., S. 3012) designed to appropriate $10 million to purchase national park land in the Smokies. Although the bill never made it out of committee, it did give

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[21]Wiley Brownlee to W. P. Davis, 27 October 1923, W. P. Davis Papers, GSMNP Archives.

[22]"Excerpts from Directors' Meetings of the Knoxville Automobile Club."

valuable exposure to the Smokies as a potential national park site.

By early 1924 Davis's most important ally in promoting the national park project in East Tennessee, Colonel David C. Chapman, became involved in the Smoky Mountains Conservation Association. Chapman, like Davis, was a prominent local businessman, President of the Chapman Drug Company. He also served on the boards of directors of the Knoxville Automobile Club and the Knoxvile Chamber of Commerce.[23] Chapman quickly became the chief public spokesman for the Conservation Association, and matched Davis step-for-step in his enthusiasm, energy, and salesmanship.

Chapman saw the park as a means to an end, the long sought answer to bring much needed roads and resultant economic development to the region. In his first recorded public statements concerning the national park issue at a Kiwanis club meeting in January 1924 Chapman declared that if a national park were established in the Smokies "tourists by the thousands would pass through Knoxville to reach" this "veritable paradise of beauty." He went on to argue that four million people visited Colorado every year, yet eighty-two percent of the population of the nation lived closer to the Smokies, and these mountains "rising sheer out of the East Tennessee valleys present a grander spectacle than the mountains of the west." Chapman went on to lament that this grand future could not be realized unless the government built a suitable road into the region connecting Tennessee with North Carolina.[24]

Once the Southern Appalachian National Park committee had been established, the Smoky Mountain Conservation Association began an intensive study of the Smokies in order to make an attractive presentation to the committee. In May of 1924, Davis,

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[23]*Knoxville Men and Women of Affairs* (Knoxville: GSM Publishing Co., 1928).

[24]*Knoxville Journal and Tribune*, 1 February 1924.

Chapman, Brownlee and several other park boosters made a five-day inspection trip into the Smokies. Many of the boosters took their first close-up view of the region they wanted to see become a national park. The trip had a three-fold purpose, to see the proposed area first-hand, to promote road building into the area--officials of the Tennessee State Highway Department accompanied the group--and to build a liaison with like minded individuals in Bryson City, North Carolina. A road connecting Knoxville and Bryson City had long been one of Chapman's major causes. Noted author Horace Kephart led the Bryson City delegation, along with S. E. Varner, chairman of the Swain County Commissioners, and Dr. Kelly E. Bennett, the mayor of Bryson City. The group concluded the trip with a banquet at Bryson City where Davis, Chapman, and Kephart extolled the group with visions of the economic benefits that would descend upon their respective regions with the coming of a national park and good roads. This began an important relationship between boosters in Knoxville and Bryson City, and most importantly between David Chapman and Horace Kephart, who became two of the strongest leaders in the movement to bring a national park to the Great Smoky Mountains.[25]

This early cooperation between Bryson City and North Carolina boosters culminated in an editorial supporting the establishment of a national park in the Smokies in the *New York Times* in late July 1924. The editorial quoted heavily from W. P. Davis and from Kephart. Indeed, Kephart's prominence and national name recognition probably helped gain the attention of the *Times* in the first place. The article spoke of the variety of trees "that have never been touched by the woodman's axe," the clear streams teeming with fish, the accessibility of the site by automobile, and the fact that "only a few herdsmen, hunters, lumbermen and surveyors have penetrated the recesses of this wilderness."

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[25]*Knoxville Sentinel*, 24 May 1924.

The article concluded by arguing that Congress needed to act quickly in order to save the region from spoliation, and that "for all the delights of wilderness under the sun and stars, the region of the Great Smokies alone in the East has the resources required for a national playground."[26]

Other North Carolinians also began to organize to attract the attention of the committee, although most supported locations other than the Smokies. In late 1923 U. S. Representative Zebulon Weaver of Western North Carolina introduced a bill to turn the Pisgah National Forest near Asheville into a national park.[27] However, the strongest and best organized effort came from the Grandfather Mountain and Linville Gorge area. Nelson McRae, president of the Linville Improvement Company, owners of Grandfather Montain and much of the surrounding area, led the way. This site received a key endorsement at a July 4, 1924 meeting of North Carolina civic organizations in Blowing Rock. The organizations endorsing the Grandfather Mountain/Linville Gorge area included the Chambers of Commerce of the two largest metropolitan areas of the western part of North Carolina, Asheville and Charlotte, and of the regional booster group Western North Carolina, Inc.[28]

The Grandfather Mountain area had earlier been considered as a potential national park site. In 1917 the Interior Department's appropriation carried a rider allowing the Secretary to accept the donation of Grandfather Mountain as a national park. However, when Stephen Mather looked into the matter he realized that the Linvile Improvement Company intended to give the Interior Department only the summit of the

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[26]*New York Times*, 27 July 1924, 4-E.

[27]*Asheville Citizen*, 13 January 1924.

[28]Ibid., 30 July 1924.

mountain and retain all of the surrounding property. Mather turned down the offer, arguing that "the purpose of the National Park Service is not to inflate private land values."[29]

By the early part of 1924 boosters all over the southern Appalachian region were organizing, attempting to attract the attention of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee. The next step for the Committee was to begin on-site investigations of all the potential sites to determine which ones truly met what they perceived as national park standards.

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[29]Shankland, *Stephen Mather*, 172.

CHAPTER 3

NATIONAL PARK STANDARDS

The Southern Appalachian National Park Committee decided to begin on-site investigations of possible locations for national parks in the region in late July 1924. A special fund made up of donations from Park Service Director Stephen Mather, committee member William Gregg, and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. covered the committee's travel expenses.[1] The committee put together a rather loose itinerary for a late July or early August trip to visit possible sites in Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Booster groups began feverish preparations for the committee's visit.

The President of Western Carolina Inc., Joseph Hyde Pratt, organized the North Carolina portion of the trip. Pratt submitted a list of twenty possible sites in Western North Carolina that the committee might visit, and began setting up visits. The *Asheville Citizen* reported that "the visit of the national committee is expected to be one of the greatest boosts ever given to this section to bring to the attention of the world the scenic and recreational advantages of Western North Carolina."[2]

In Tennessee, the Smoky Mountain Conservation Association actively solicited the support of Governor Austin Peay and urged him to come to East Tennessee and meet with the committee in support of the Knoxville bid. Both Davis and Chapman wrote to Peay requesting his presence for the visit. Chapman virtually implored Peay to come:

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[1] *Final Report of the SANPC*, 2.

[2] Joseph Hyde Pratt to Glenn S. Smith, 19 July 1924, Box 1147, File 870-1, RG 79, NA; and *Asheville Citizen*, 28 and 30 July 1924.

> It [the Smokies] contains the greatest mountain mass in the eastern half of America, and the greatest hardwood forests that now stand or have ever stood at the greatest elevation. It meets all the requirements for a national park and unless speedy action is taken it will be destroyed, as the lumber companies are pushing their plans to take out the timber since they fear it may be taken over by the government. Its destruction would be a serious crime against our culture and civilization, and its preservation as a national park would bring to Tennessee great wealth and great prestige. We are therefore extremely desirous of your presence and your influence.[3]

Peay agreed to meet with the committee when it visited East Tennessee.

On July 26, 1924 the committee began a whirlwind inspection tour of part of the region. The committee, accompanied by Secretary of the Interior Work, first stopped in Gainesville, Georgia, where a delegation of over sixty men including Governor Clifford M. Walker, U.S. Senator W.J. Harris, and U.S. Representative Thomas M. Bell met them. The group spent two days in the North Georgia mountains, and on July 28 passed into North Carolina to the resort town of Highlands, a town founded by the father of committee member Harlan Kelsey and the town where Kelsey spent much of his early life.[4] Pratt and members of Western North Carolina, Inc. met the committee at Highlands, and for the next five days the committee inspected sites in the Western North Carolina mountains, although Secretary Work became ill and returned to Washington. The group visited Whiteside Mountain near Brevard, Asheville for a stay at the Grove Park Inn, Mount Mitchell, Blowing Rock, Grandfather Mountain, and Linville Gorge.[5] Although careful not to single out any particular site, members of the committee told the press that they had seen numerous sites suitable for national park purposes on their tour.

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[3]David Chapman to Austin Peay, Peay Papers, Box 13, File 8, TSLA.

[4]*Asheville Citizen*, 30 July 1924.

[5]*Final Report of the SANPC*, 2-3.

This reaction instilled confidence in Western North Carolina boosters.[6]

Although professing neutrality, it became apparent that both Pratt and the *Asheville Citizen* supported the Grandfather Mountain/Linville Gorge site. *Citizen* reporter George McCoy mentioned in two separate stories that while Pratt did not want to sway the committee in any particular way, he supported the Linville area as the most suitable site. In a story summarizing the committee's visit to Western North Carolina, McCoy emphasized the Linville site, although he argued that the *Citizen* "is so little concerned as to the exact location, knowing that it inevitably must largely lie in Western North Carolina." Western North Carolinians also banked on Harlan Kelsey's close ties to the area, and Linville supporters reminded Kelsey that his father had first opened that area up to tourist development in 1888, when he began the construction of the Yonahlossee Road connecting Blowing Rock and Linville.[7]

In the midst of the North Carolina visit the Knoxville boosters became concerned that the committee was becoming unduly influenced by North Carolina boosters and therefore decided to visit the committee and plead their case in Asheville. Because they had only been given an approximate date for the committee's visit, the Knoxville boosters also feared that the committee might not visit Knoxville and the Smokies at all. The day before this trip Chapman publicly criticized rival sites in North Carolina and Georgia, arguing that these sections had been cut over, making them unsuitable for national park purposes.[8] On July 29 Chapman, Davis, Representative J. Will Taylor, and several other members of the Smoky Mountains Conservation Association traveled to Asheville

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[6]*Asheville Citizen*, 2 and 3 August 1924.

[7]Ibid., 30 July, 2 and 3 August 1924.

[8]*Knoxville Sentinel*, 27 July 1924.

and met the committee at the Grove Park Inn. The group also brought a photograph album of pictures of the Tennessee Smokies taken by Knoxville photographer Jim Thompson. The Knoxville group met with the committee for three hours and received assurances that they would give the Smokies full consideration and that at least part of the committee would indeed visit Knoxville and the Smokies on this particular trip.[9]

On August 4 Harlan Kelsey and William Gregg arrived in Knoxville to inspect the Smokies. For the next five days Knoxville boosters took the committee members on a tour of major points of interest in the mountains. A group of about twenty-five hiked to the top and camped at Mt. LeConte on August 6. They spent the next three days on trips in cars, on horseback, and by logging train to Cades Cove, Gregory Bald, Elkmont, and Clingman's Dome. Governor Peay joined the group for the last two days of the trip, and became a strong supporter of the project in the process. In Gatlinburg the committee also met with botany professors H. C. Longwell from Princeton University, Arthur Kendall from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, and William Trelease from the University of Illinois who encouraged the commitee to consider the Smokies because of its biological diversity.[10] At the end of trip Kelsey returned home, but Gregg traveled over Indian Gap to Bryson City and inspected the North Carolina side of the Smokies.[11]

On August 18 Kelsey wrote to Representative Temple giving his impressions of the trip. Kelsey expressed his awe at the beauty of the Smokies and the size of the area. He also informed Temple that a Georgia group was promoting the idea of a four-state park,

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[9]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 25.

[10]"Excerpts from the Directors' Meetings of the Knoxville Automobile Club," GSMCA Papers, Box XII, File 12, GSMNP Archives.

[11]*Final Report SANPC*, 3-4.

with sections of the park in Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Kelsey had warned the Knoxville boosters not to support such a scheme and had also advised them that local propagandizing would have a damaging effect with the committee. Kelsey had spoken at some length with Governor Peay and urged him to get all of the southern governors together to get the governors and boosters to forget state boundaries and "work for the best thing that the Southern Appalachians afford."[12]

The first inspection tour of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee stirred activity all over the region, and few in the region proved willing to forget state boundaries. Senator W.J. Harris brought intense pressure to bear on Secretary Work to select a site in North Georgia. Delegations from Alabama, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Virginia began to demand that the committee visit sites in their states.[13]

In North Carolina a competitive spirit combined with the ideals of business progressivism to elicit an aggressive reaction. U. S. Senator Marion Butler urged the North Carolina legislature, already meeting in special session, to appoint a commission to advance the claims of the state with the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee and with the Department of the Interior. Butler reportedly headlined a telegram to the legislature with the warning: "NORTH CAROLINA MUST GET BUSY OR WE MAY NOT GET NATIONAL PARK, IT LOOKS AS THOUGH GEORGIA IS ABOUT TO WIN."[14]

With the active support of mountain area legislators, particularly Senator Mark Squires and Representatives Harry Nettles and Plato Ebbs, the General Assembly, on

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[12]Harlan Kelsey to Henry Temple, 18 August 1924, Box 1147, File 870-1, RG 79, NA.

[13]Henry Temple to Harlan Kelsey, 25 August 1924, Box 1147, File 870-1, RG 79, NA.

[14]Ibid.

August 23, 1924, approved the appointment of a " Commission on the Part of North Carolina for the Purpose of Presenting the Claims of North Carolina for a National Park." The joint resolution called for a committee of eleven, three members chosen by the President of the Senate, five chosen by the Speaker of the House, with the Speaker of the House, the President of the University of North Carolina, and the President of North Carolina State College serving as ex officio members. The three ex officio members were appointed to insure that Speaker John Dawson of Kinston and E.C. Brooks, President of the State College in Raleigh, would serve on the commission. Although neither man came from the western part of the state, both were strong business progressives and avid supporters of the park idea. Brooks also brought a good deal of experience in dealing with northern philanthropists, particularly the Rockefeller Foundation's General Education Board, in his earlier capacity as State Superintendent of Public Instruction.[15]

The other members of the commission included: Harry Chase of Chapel Hill, Mark Squires of Lenoir, Harry Nettles of Biltmore, Plato Ebbs of Asheville, D. M. Buck of Bald Mountain, A. M. Kistler of Morganton, Frank Linney of Boone, E. S. Parker, Jr. of Greensboro, and J. H. Dillard of Murphy. The commission had strong sympathies for the Linville/Grandfather Mountain site as three of the members came from that immediate area, and Kistler, in particular, had strong ties to the Linville Improvement Company. The General Assembly appropriated $2500 to cover the expenses of the commission.[16]

This special commission began meeting in October 1924. Although only four members attended the first meeting, those present believed it important to get started

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[15]General Assembly of North Carolina, Resolution No. 16 and No. 29, 23 August 1924; and Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role,"167-168.

[16]Ibid.

immediately. The group designated Squires as the chairman, while Brooks became the secretary. Despite the lack of a quorum, they later retained these positions and emerged as the key leaders in the North Carolina national park movement. The commission authorized H.M. Curran of the State College and the State Department of Agriculture to begin to collect data on the suitability of possible sites in North Carolina. At the commission's second meeting Curran brought a map that included a proposed area of approximately 1000 square miles, tieing together most of the prospective areas in the western part of the state. The commision also appointed a special committee, composed of Brooks, Kistler, Dawson, Buck, and Squires, to go immediately to Washington to lobby federal authorities on behalf of the proposed North Carolina site.[17]

The establishment of this commission would serve to differentiate the North Carolina national park movement from that in Tennessee. Because of the interest of the General Assembly and the regional balance of the commission, the North Carolina park movement would become more of a state-wide movement, while the Tennessee movement would always be perceived as an East Tennessee, Knoxville-dominated movement.

In Tennessee the visit of the two members of the Southern Appalachian Natonal Park Committee also stimulated a great deal of activity. As one of its first priorities Knoxville boosters enlisted the ongoing support of Governor Austin Peay. Peay's business progressive viewpoint, his love for the outdoors, and the favorable impression he had formed on his first visit to the region made this an easy task. In addition, several of his closest East Tennessee advisors informed him that support for a national park in East Tennessee could be politically beneficial in the upcoming election. Knoxville lawyer Williston Cox advised Peay that if he continued his support for the park effort that "the

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[17]"Minutes of Former North Carolina Park Commission," Parks ORC Papers, File 136, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina (hereafter NCSA).

Republicans [in East Tennessee] will certainly sit up and take notice."[18] Peay's close friend, Knoxville automobile dealer Claude Reeder, also advised Peay to back the park.[19]

Increasingly Peay began to take an active role in the park project, especially as the prospect of early acquisition of land in the Smokies became a real possibility. At the urging of Davis and Chapman, Peay began negotiations with W. B. Townsend, President of the Little River Lumber Company, for securing a 78,131 acre tract of land in the Smokies. Davis had expressed interest in the property for several months and had written Secretary Work in early 1924 advising him of the possible availability of the land. The Forest Service had almost bought the land a few years before and the land had already been surveyed and the titles approved. Peay decided to try and get the state to purchase the land for part of a national park; and if the national park did not work out, then for a state park.[20]

On September 13, 1924 Peay secured an option on the property from Colonel Townsend. The option would lapse on February 1, 1925, if the General Assembly did not agree to purchase the land. This action raised the hopes of Knoxville park boosters who hoped that the prospect of purchasing such a sizable piece of land in the Smokies would favorably impress the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee.[21] The

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[18]Williston Cox to Austin Peay, 25 September 1924, Peay Papers, Box 13, File 11, TSLA.

[19]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 31.

[20]W. P. Davis to Hubert Work, 1 February 1924, Box 305, File 601, RG 79, NA; W. P. Davis to Austin Peay, 16 August 1924 and 23 August 1924, Peay Papers, Box 13, File 11, TSLA; and Court Document, "Charles E. Malone, et al. vs. Austin Peay, et al.," GSMCA Papers, Box VII, File 5, GSMNP Archives.

[21]Ibid.

anticipation of acquiring this land brought a particularly enthusiastic reaction from Davis:

> I think it will be one of the greatest moves you have ever made in your administration. And then, after we have secured that property for a State Park, later when it comes to the National Park proposition, it will be mighty fine if our state could offer this land to the National Government for part of the National Park. . . . the comparatively small amount of expense involved in securing this property, would be infinitesimal in the actual results obtained by the State of Tennessee through this purchase, for there is absolutely no way of estimating the amount of money that would be spent by tourists in the many years to come.[22]

Meanwhile, the inspection work of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee continued. On September 12 Welch and Smith visited White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. They continued from there to the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, where they spent three days inspecting the area around Skyland resort and Stony Man Mountain. Both the site and the enthusiastic reception given them by several hundred boosters impressed Welch and Smith, and they announced that they would return with the full committee. The Blue Ridge site's location, only a few hours away from Washington, D. C., and the support of the powerful Byrd political machine of Virginia gave this site a decided advantage. In the next two months various committee members also visited Northern Alabama, committee members who had not previously visited the Blue Ridge of Virginia and the Smokies inspected those sites, and several on the committee reinspected sites they had already visited.[23]

After the completion of these inspections the committee met in early December to consider its recommendations. On December 12 the committee made its report to Secretary Work. The report began favorably for the Smokies boosters:

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[22]W. P. Davis to Austin Peay, 31 December 1924, Peay Papers, Box 13, File 11, TSLA.

[23]*Final Report SANPC*, 4-6.

> We have found many areas which could well be chosen, but the committee was charged with the responsibility of selecting the best, all things considered. Of these several possible sites the Great Smoky Mountains easily stand first because of the height of the mountains, depth of the valleys, ruggedness of the area, and the unexampled variety of trees, shrubs, and plants. The region includes Mount Guyot, Mount LeConte, Clingmans Dome, and Gregory Bald, and may be extended in several directions to include other splendid mountain regions adjacent thereto.[24]

In the next paragraph, however, the report discussed problems associated with the Smokies. The ruggedness and altitude made road building and development difficult and expensive, and excessive rainfall of the area might put a damper on development and recreation.[25]

The shocker for both North Carolinians and Tennesseans came when the committee recommended the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia as the "outstanding and logical place" for a national park. The committee listed the reasons for this selection as the proximity to the nation's capital and 40 million people, the scenic beauty, the historical interest of the area, and the possibility of building a skyline drive along the ridges through the park.[26]

The news stunned Knoxville and North Carolina park boosters, as both had convinced themselves that their sites would be chosen. The *Knoxville Sentinel* reported that "astonishment and amazement are the two words that describe the feeling of the Smoky Mountain Conservation Association." David Chapman asserted that "hidden influences" must be at work as no national park site had ever been selected "merely on account of proximity." Russell Hanlon of the East Tennessee Automobile Association lamented the

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[24]Ibid., 7.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

loss of an estimated $10 million that a national park would generate for the region.[27] The headlines of the *Asheville Citizen* reflected more resignation to the Committee's decision: "North Carolina Fails In Fight For Playground." An editorial urged North Carolinians to move on and increase their cooperation with the Forest Service and further develop the land in Western North Carolina already under Forest Service management.[28]

However, neither side proved willing to surrender yet, and both North Carolinians and Knoxvillians began to urge their Representatives and Senators to advance their cause in Congress, particularly as Representative Temple had introduced a resolution (68th Congress, H. R. 10738) to appoint a special commission to establish boundaries for a Shenandoah National Park. In North Carolina, U. S. Senator Furnifold Simmons took the lead in advancing his state's cause. Simmons held immense power in both the Senate, as the senior Democrat on the Finance Committee, and in North Carolina, as the recognized leader of the Democratic Party machine in the state.[29]

Simmons organized a meeting of the North Carolina Park Commission in Washington for January 19, 1925. He called on North Carolinians to present a solid front to Congress, and unite behind one park site--Simmons supported the Linville/Grandfather Mountain site. He publicly criticized the Smokies as a national park site, because it would prevent crucial water power development in the region. Most importantly, Simmons threw his weight behind a threat to organize the congressional delegations from several southern states to defeat any bill that proposed the establishment of a national

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[27] *Knoxville Sentinel*, 14 December 1924.

[28] *Asheville Citizen*, 14 and 15 December 1924.

[29] Key, *Southern Politics*, 212-13.

park only in Virginia.[30]

The Tennessee congressional delegation also reacted aggressively to promote the Smokies site. Senator Kenneth McKellar actively promoted Tennesses's claims in the Senate. In the House of Representatives J. Will Taylor and Carroll Reece received the assurances of the Chairman of the Public Lands Committee, Nicholas Sinnot, that the Smokies would receive fair consideration.[31]

By early January Park Service officials, Secretary Work, and the members of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee realized that unless they reached some sort of compromise there would be no new national park in the southern Appalachians. The addition of the Smokies to Representative Temple's resolution seemed the logical and natural choice. Recommendation by the committee as the best site and its location in two states gave the Smokies a major advantage over other sites. In addition the bill would now have the support of the three powerful congressional delegations from Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina. On January 11, 1925 Secretary Work issued a press release calling for Congress to establish two national parks in the East: "It is my opinion that this commission instead of confining its work to the Blue Ridge site should also be authorized by Congress to investigate into the cost of establishing a second national park in the Great Smokies area."[32]

At this point the Smokies site finally began to gain the support of some important North Carolina politicians. Horace Kephart actively campaigned for the Smokies site

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[30] *Asheville Citizen*, 7 January 1925.

[31] *Knoxville Sentinel*, 6 January 1925.

[32] "Department of the Interior Memorandum for the Press," 11 January 1925, Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

with U. S. Representative Zebulon Weaver. Kephart attempted to counteract the contention of Senator Simmons and others that the establishment of a national park in the Smokies would damage water power development in the region:

> There is no water-power site of any consequence in the territory under consideration in the Smoky Mountains. The contemplated boundary would take in none but small streams. . . . On the other hand, the perpetual preservation of the Smoky forests would be the best thing possible for the water-power interests, because it would preserve the stream flow of the river feeders. If those forests are all cut off, there will be droughts alternating with disastrous floods and immense deposits of silt in the dam basins. Ask the water-power people themselves if this is not so.[33]

Kephart also urged Weaver to consider the economic value of tourism to the region, especially as Western North Carolina lumber interests began to oppose the Smokies site due to their extensive holdings in the area:

> What made Asheville and the other flourishing towns of western North Carolina? How much did the lumber trade do for them? Was it not the climate and the scenery that attracted wealthy outsiders, first as tourists, then as residents, then as investors? There is the great commercial asset of this country. It lasts forever and forever grows in value. Consider the rise of Asheville real estate, and its future; then turn and consider what our mountain land is worth when the timber is all cut off.[34]

By the middle of January Weaver and Representative Charles Abernethy recognized both the wisdom of Kephart's words and the political reality that North Carolina would never receive enough congressional support to gain a national park site entirely within the state's boundaries, and began actively to support the Smokies site. Abernethy's support proved especially crucial, as he served on the House Committee on the Public Lands

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[33]Horace Kephart to Zebulon Weaver, 9 January 1925, Horace Kephart Papers, Western Carolina University Special Collections, Cullowhee, North Carolina (hereafter WCUSC).

[34]Horace Kephart to Zebulon Weaver, 13 January 1925, Horace Kephart Papers, WCUSC.

which was considering the legislation.[35]

As the Tennessee congressional delegation worked to insure inclusion of the Smokies in any plans for national park expansion in the South, Governor Peay and Knoxville boosters worked to strengthen their case by attempting to get the state legislature to accept the option on the Little River Lumber Company property. Peay and the boosters hoped that in securing the option on this land that they could convince Congress that they deserved consideration. On January 24, 1925 Governor Peay, a delegation from the General Assembly, and Welch of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee came to Knoxville to inspect the Little River land. Several hundred Knoxvillians greeted them at the train station. During the course of this visit Peay secured both an extension of the option from Colonel Townsend and the public assurance that Knoxville would contribute one-third of the cost of the purchase of the Little River land.[36]

The lobbying efforts of Tennessee and North Carolina politicians and the efforts of Governor Peay, Knoxville boosters, and Horace Kephart paid off when Representative Temple and Senator Claude Swanson of Virginia agreed to introduce new legislation in each house of Congress. On January 27, 1925 Swanson and McKellar introduced a bill in the Senate (68th Congress, S. 4109) and Temple introduced a bill in the House (68th Congress, H. R. 11980) calling for the determination of boundaries for national parks in both the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia and the Great Smoky Mountains.[37] Senator Simmons attempted to salvage the claims of the Linville/Grandfather Mountain

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[35] *Asheville Citizen*, 18 January 1925.

[36] *Knoxville Sentinel*, 24, 25, and 28 January 1925; and Whaley, "A Timely Idea at an Ideal Time," 33-34.

[37] "Acts of Congress Relating to Great Smoky Mountains National Park," Box 1079, File 120, RG 79, NA.

supporters by introducing his own bill to have a special congressional committee composed of three Senators and three Representatives investigate the Blue Ridge, Great Smokies, and Linville sites and make their recommendations to Congress. This bill never made it to the floor of the Senate, and died in committee.[38]

On February 21, 1925 Congress took the first major step in establishing a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains when it approved and President Coolidge signed the Swanson/McKellar bill into law (68th Congress, 43 Stat. 958). The last minute addition of Mammoth Cave as a site to be mapped secured the support of the Kentucky delegation and put the bill over the top. The bill called for the Secretary of the Interior to appoint a special commission to determine the boundaries for each proposed park, allowed the Secretary to receive donations of land and secure land options once the commission had determined the boundaries, and appropriated $20,000 for securing options and for the expenses of the commission.[39] Secretary Work appointed all of the members of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee as the new commission to determine the boundaries of the parks and receive donations of land and money to secure options.[40]

In a little over one and one half years the dreams of Horace Kephart, W. P. Davis, and Ann Davis had received the official attention of Congress. Despite this recognition, however, park boosters had little time for celebration; and the establishment of the Park lay in the far distant future. In both states powerful opposition from timber interests,

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[38] *Asheville Citizen*, 27 January 1925.

[39] "Acts of Congress Relating to GSMNP."

[40] "Department of the Interior Memorandum for the Press," 27 February 1925, Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

political opponents of park supporters, and those who still wanted the selection of other sites began to form against the Great Smoky Mountains National Park effort. An even more daunting task faced park supporters because Congress had made it clear that it would not authorize the use of federal funds for the purchase of land for national park purposes. Park supporters now needed to consider how they could raise the estimated $10 million necessary to purchase the land, and how they could convince Congress that they were indeed serious about the establishment of a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains.

CHAPTER 4

ORGANIZATION, OPPOSITION, AND ENDORSEMENTS

After Congress designated the Smokies as a potential national park, booster organizations in Western North Carolina and East Tennessee began the work of convincing the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission and Congress that the people of the region were willing and able to purchase the land necessary to establish a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains. However, as local groups organized in support of the park movement opponents of the project began to campaign publicly and behind the scenes to try and derail the project before it went too far. It became imperative to the success of the park project to find effective means of gaining widespread support for the park from the people of Western North Carolina and East Tennessee in order to impress government officials, raise funds for promotion and the purchase of land, and throw back the serious challenge made by park opponents. Although the means employed by boosters varied with the audience, economic arguments touting the Smokies as a potential gold mine that would bring continuous riches and prosperity to the region proved most effective.

For Tennesseans getting the state legislature to accept the option offered by the Little River Lumber Company served as the first order of business. Despite the active support of Governor Peay, traditional regional jealousies between the three "grand divisions" of the state and active opposition by some powerful East Tennesseans placed formidable hurdles in the path of park boosters. In order to sway legislators--many of whom considered the Little River land as "stump land"--the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce

chartered a special train to bring the legislature to Knoxville.[1] This trip would serve a two-fold purpose, to visit the University of Tennessee--which at the time was requesting a large appropriation, and had just been subject to a legislative investigation for reported financial malfeasance--and to inspect the Little River land.[2]

The train arrived in Knoxville on March 14, 1925 and Knoxville turned out to promote its university and the Smokies. The University of Tennessee marching band greeted the legislators at the station and a weekend of tours and entertainment began. On Sunday the 15th, Knoxville boosters took the legislators by car to Townsend and then up the Little River Gorge to Elkmont by train. They then treated them to a luncheon at the Appalachian Club, where David Chapman addressed the group. Chapman recounted the tremendous benefits that would accrue to the state if it had a national park, and reaffirmed Knoxville's willingness to finance one-third of the purchase price. After the luncheon the party rode the train back through the Little River Gorge to Townsend and continued their tour in cars over Rich Mountain and into Cades Cove. The group arrived in Knoxville by nightfall and boarded the train to return to Nashville.[3] The next day the *Knoxville News* practically gushed with enthusiasm concerning the legislature's visit: "There is no doubt that even the most prosaic of the lawmakers was mightily impressed with the beauty of the scenery thru Little River Gorge and up Rich Mountain and thru the pass, giving a panoramic view of billows of mountains and the valleys between."[4]

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[1]*Knoxville Journal*, 23 February and 8 March 1925; and Whaley, "A Timely Idea at an Ideal Time," 37-38.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid., 16 March 1925.

[4]*Knoxville News*, 16 March 1925.

Despite the success of the legislature's visit, park boosters knew that several powerful groups and individuals still opposed the bill. David Chapman, Chamber of Commerce Secretary-Treasurer Carlos Campbell, Knoxville auto dealer and Peay crony Claude Reeder, and East Tennessee U.S. Representative J. Will Taylor went to Nashville to lobby on behalf of the bill. In the Tennessee House of Representatives Ann Davis sponsored the bill. Davis had been elected to office the previous fall, becoming one of the first women to sit in the Tennessee state legislature. W.P. Davis wrote his wife frequently giving her information to use in trying to convince her fellow legislators to support the bill. Invariably these letters came around to the wonderful economic benefits that would come to Tennessee if the state gained a national park:

> It is only a matter of a few years until the accumulated wealth should pay the entire debt of the state, and instead of having to be closed fisted and niggardly in our appropriations for the University, for the schools and for every other purpose that will benefit the people of the State of Tennessee we will have millions more to spend for every purpose necessary for the prosperity, happiness and peace of our citizens, and it will be a crime if we do not now while we have this opportunity buy this property and furnish a nucleus to the government for the establishment of a National park, and every member of the Legislature who votes for the small appropriation needed to purchase the land called for will be blessed by prosperity forever, and he who has sufficient vision to see the need and meets it now will never regret it.[5]

In early April the bill came before the Tennessee legislature. The Senate approved the purchase bill on April 1, and also approved a bill establishing a state park and forestry commission to purchase land and turn it over to the federal government "if and when a national park in the Smokies is created."[6] The bill didn't fare as well in the House of Representatives and failed by a vote of 47-45 on April 8. The *Knoxville Journal* atributed the bill's failure to the recent large appropriation made for the

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[5]W.P. Davis to Ann Davis, 28 March 1925, W.P. Davis Papers, GSMNP Archives.

[6]*Knoxville News*, 1 April 1925.

University of Tennessee and the unwillingness of many Middle and West Tennessee legislators to spend so much money on East Tennessee in one legislative session.[7] Governor Peay immediately launched an offensive announcing that passage of this bill, next to the eight month school bill, would mean more to Tennessee than any other measure being considered by the Legislature. He also called several legislators to his office who had voted against the bill and encouraged them to change their votes. The next day supporters reintroduced the bill into the House of Representatives, along with a bill authorizing Knoxville to pay one-third of the purchase price, and it passed 58-32.[8] On April 10 Governor Peay signed the bill into law (Chapter 57, Public Acts of 1925), and presented the pen to Ann Davis.[9]

The bill contained two important provisos which would come back to haunt park supporters in later years. The first allowed the Little River Lumber company to retain the timber rights to 16,000 acres in the middle prong of Little River for fifteen years, allowing them to continue to cut the virgin timber in this area, and prohibiting the state from condemning the land during this period. The second proviso authorized the Tennessee State Park and Forestry Commission to purchase the Little River land officially "only in the event that the United States of America shall by proper legislative Act of Congress, within two years from the passage of this act have first designated said lands to be included as a National Park area, to be maintained as such by the United States of America."[10] A third problem also soon became evident because the commitment for

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[7]*Knoxville Journal*, 9 March 1925.

[8]*Knoxville News*, 9 April 1925.

[9]*Knoxville Journal*, 11 April 1925.

[10]Chapter 57, State of Tennessee Public Acts of 1925.

the City of Knoxville to pay one-third of the purchase price had come not from any elective body in Knoxville, but from the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce.[11]

Despite these problems, the success of the bill produced a great deal of optimism among park boosters in both states. At the urging of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission, boosters in Knoxville and Asheville followed the example of the people of the Blue Ridge of Virginia and began to organize to promote, raise funds, and buy additional lands for the proposed national park. William Gregg, Glenn Smith, and William Welch of the commission played an especially active role in supporting local efforts, visiting the region, giving speeches, writing newspaper articles, and even opening discussions with lumber companies in the Smokies.[12]

On June 5, 1925 Knoxville opened up its campaign with a luncheon hosted by the presidents of Knoxville's five national banks. Mayor Ben Morton presided and U.S. Senator L.D. Tyson spoke on behalf of the park project announcing: "We are not going to fail."[13] The group decided to incorporate the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, and raise $50,000 for promotion of the Smokies and the purchase of additional land that might become available. Knoxville boosters raised $8,300 at this meeting, $1000 donated by William Gregg.[14]

The North Carolina Park Commission held a meeting in Asheville on June 18 to discuss the possibility of cooperating with Tennessee in its efforts to gain a national park

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[11] *Knoxville Journal*, 31 March 1926.

[12] "Minutes of the Third Meeting of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission, July 18, 1925," Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[13] *Knoxville Journal*, 5 and 6 June 1925.

[14] *Knoxville News*, 5 and 6 June 1925.

in the Great Smoky Mountains. David Chapman and other members of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association attended the meeting, along with William Gregg and William Welch. However, several members of the NCPC and a number of prominent Western North Carolina national park enthusiasts remained committed to the Linville/Grandfather Mountain site. Local timber interests, who wanted to see the Smokies turned into a national forest so that they could continue to have access to the timber, threw their support behind the Linville group. The meeting began on a bad note for Smokies boosters as Linville/Grandfather Mountain supporters expressed their intention to continue to press the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission to choose their site and refused to support the Smokies site. Gregg responded to this challenge by asserting that their lack of support would damage everyone's chances of gaining Congressional approval and reminded them: "We must all sacrifice something for the general good. Some of you must also sacrifice your own preferences if North Carolina is to grasp her opportunity."[15] Finally, state senator Plato Ebbs, a member of the North Carolina Park Commision and an officer in the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, made a motion that the Park Commission cooperate with Tennessee in support of the Smokies site. The Commission voted in favor of Ebb's motion, and Smokies supporters had won a significant victory.[16]

Despite the commitment of the North Carolina Park Commission to back the Smokies project, public support in Western North Carolina remained lukewarm, and opposition from timber companies and Forest Service employees began to mount. The Champion Fibre Company, the largest landowner in the Smokies, stood at the forefront of the

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[15]*Knoxville Journal*, 19 June 1925.

[16]Ibid.; and *Knoxville News*, 19 June 1925.

opposition. Champion actively lobbied the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission to forget the Smokies and allow the Forest Service to administer the land. Champion Fibre Company Chief Forester W. J. Damtoft wrote to Harlan Kelsey arguing "that to create a National Park out of an area merely because of its beauty is to depart from past policy of having Parks only where there are unique topographic features or unusual natural phenomena." He continued that any area fit for national park status "should acclaim itself and should not have to be hunted."[17] Both Damtoft and Champion President, Reuben Robertson, emphasized the economic importance of the Smokies timber to their particular operation and to the economy of Western North Carolina.[18]

In July the Western North Carolina Lumber and Timber Association passed a resolution declaring that "the National Park System is not adapted to the needs of Western North Carolina." The resolution went on to condemn "the agitation to establish one in the Smoky Mountains." The Association justified its position based on its opposition "to the segregation of enormous areas of forest lands and lands suitable for growing forests into dead hands, where it cannot be used, no matter how vital its use may be to the industries of this State, and to the material needs of this nation."[19]

Forest Service employees also began to stir up opposition to the Smokies project throughout Western North Carolina, despite declarations by both the Secretary of Agriculture and the Director of the Forest Service that the Forest Service had withdrawn its interest in the Smokies. Harlan Kelsey visited the region and reported to fellow

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[17]W.J. Damtoft to Harlan P. Kelsey, 18 May 1925, Box 25, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[18]Ibid.; and William Gregg to H.W. Temple, 2 June 1925, Box 25, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[19]*Asheville Citizen*, 26 July 1925.

members of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission that forest rangers in Western North Carolina had told area residents that "they would have their homes seized at a very low figure and would be excluded from the area and might just as well give up hope if the National Park took in that area."[20] Reuben Robertson revealed to Kelsey that local Forest Sevice employees had confided in him that they had withdrawn from the area "only temporarily" and would take over the area when the national park project failed.[21] Smokies boosters also accused Forest Service employees of distributing unsigned literature warning Western North Carolinians of the disaster to come if the park became a reality.[22]

A relative lack of public interest, however, proved to be the most serious problem in North Carolina. Gregg reported in July: "In spite of our 'victory' at Asheville and the vote of the North Carolina Commission endorsing the Great Smoky National Park proposition, the interest is rather lukewarm."[23] The reticence of Western North Carolina's largest and most influential newspaper, the *Asheville Citizen*, posed the most serious problem. Gregg expressed his disappointment that the *Citizen* had printed unsigned letters giving the concerns of the timber interests, and had made favorable editorial comments about these concerns.[24]

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[20]Harlan P. Kelsey to Henry W. Temple, 22 September 1925, Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[21]Ibid.

[22]Ibid.

[23]William Gregg to H.W. Temple and other Park Commissioners, 4 July 1925, Box 204, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[24]Ibid.

Glenn Smith reported a mixed message after meeting with Mark Squires and A.M. Kistler of the North Carolina Park Commission in the Smokies. Both supported the Linville/Grandfather Mountain site, but after seeing the Smokies first hand reportedly became "sold" on the site. However, Squires, Chairman of the Commission, told Smith that he did not believe that the people of North Carolina would "put up a cent by popular subscription or in donating any land for national park purposes."[25] Smith lamented to Southern Appalachian National Park Commission H.W. Temple: "I am afraid that there is a good deal of politics mixed in in connection with the establishment of the national park in North Carolina."[26]

The Southern Appalachian National Park Commission responded aggressively to Western North Carolina opposition and apathy. At its July 18 meeting the Commission drafted two public announcements to try and stimulate more interest in the Park project in Western North Carolina. In its first announcement the Commission warned the people of North Carolina that due to opposition and apathy in the area, "the Commission may find it necessary to modify its boundaries as originally contemplated and consider the advisability of the creation of a national park which will lie largely in the State of Tennessee."[27] The Commission also drafted a follow-up statement more specifically pointing the finger at Champion and the other large Western North Carolina timber companies stressing the urgency of the situation:

> The original Tennessee area is large and scenic; about one-half of the North Carolina project originally designated seems available, but the holdings of two or three of the largest timber corporations are difficult to acquire as virgin areas; if

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[25]Glenn S. Smith to H.W. Temple, 14 July 1925, Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[26]Ibid.

[27]"Minutes of the Third Meeting of the SANPC."

> they are not secured until after the timber is cut off they will not be fit for a national park for recreational use. The companies referred to are at the present time in active operations on some of the higher elevations and are removing the spruce and balsam in their entirety. The spruce and balsam areas which have been cut over do not reforest themselves, and immediately become covered with an almost impenetrable thicket of blackberry and other undesirable growths peculiarly susceptible to forest fires.[28]

The Commission's threat bore almost immediate fruit. The *Asheville Citizen* and its co-publisher Charles Webb, dropped its position of relative neutrality and became aggressively pro-park. On July 27 Webb ran an editorial entitled, "What Are We Doing For The Park?" where he warned the people of Western North Carolina that they were being left behind by Virginia and Tennessee. He then issued a call for action: "Isn't it about time that the people of Western North Carolina should come together in their ideas and ambitions for conserving the Smoky Mountain area, and make definite plans for carrying their ambitions into reality?"[29] On August 11 the Board of Directors of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce publicly endorsed the park project for the first time and board members personally pledged to purchase 200 acres in the park area.[30]

Webb and the *Citizen* continued their promotional onslaught throughout August and September. The front page of the August 16 edition contained a cartoon entitled, "No Time For Lethargy," showing a sleeping man designated "Western North Carolina" as Tennessee boosters struggled to pull in a big fish labeled "National Park." The Tennesseans shouted at the sleeping North Carolinian, "Hey, there! Wake up and give us

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[28]Ibid.

[29]*Asheville Citizen*, 27 July 1925.

[30]Ibid., 12 August 1925.

a hand!"[31] On the editorial page Webb gave his strongest endorsement yet for the park and pointed out the benefits to Western North Carolinians: "It would mean the real making of Western North Carolina as the 'playground of Eastern America,' and innumerable tourists would come among us to spend their money and many of them to make their homes among us. Its benefits to the present generation and the people of the future are simply inestimable."[32] Webb challenged the people of Western North Carolina not to allow a "few individuals" motivated by "personal interests" to deprive the region of this golden opportunity. In the conclusion of the editorial, Webb pledged that the *Citizen* would purchase 100 acres of Smokies land for the park.[33]

Webb became such an avid supporter of the park that he personally wrote to Secretary of Agriculture William M. Jardine informing him of the activities of Forest Service personel in opposition to the park. Webb wrote that he understood that the Forest Service had withdrawn from the area. Yet, Forest Service employees in Western North Carolina had issued "organized, systematic propaganda . . . making the most outrageous misrepresentations, terrifying and alarming the populus." Webb asserted that he knew the employees had done this without the Secretary's knowledge or consent, but felt the need to call it to his attention so that he could take proper action.[34]

The support of the *Citizen* and the Asheville Chamber of Commerce culminated in the chartering of a body to start a statewide promotion and fundraising campaign on behalf of

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[31]Ibid., 16 August 1925.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Charles A. Webb to William A. Jardine, 22 August 1925, Box 305, File 601, RG 79, NA.

the Park. Asheville boosters established Great Smoky Mountains, Inc. on September 2, 1925 to cooperate with the Knoxville-based Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association and the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission. The group elected Asheville Chamber of Commerce President Roger Miller as executive secretary and Bryson City author Horace Kephart as field secretary. They also established a $13,000 fund to pay for necessary publicity and travel expenses.[35] The next day the *Citizen* reported that "North Carolina people are beginning to more fully appreciate the proposal of a National Park."[36]

Throughout the summer and early fall the Great Smoky Mountains National Park project secured additional key endorsements and valuable publicity which helped the project to gain momentum. Knoxville boosters took advantage of the gathering of the nation's press at nearby Dayton, Tennessee for the Scopes trial in July 1925. Park supporters traveled to Dayton to try to persuade both members of the national press and major figures involved in the trial itself to visit the Smokies. On July 24 boosters gained a major coup when Clarence Darrow and John Scopes visited Elkmont as guests of David Chapman. After a horseback ride to the top of Gregory Bald, Darrow gave a ringing endorsement of the Smokies to the gathered press: "I have been in most of the national parks of this country and I have seen many mountains, but never have I seen any view to surpass this. By all means this should be conserved as a national park."[37]

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[35]"Minutes of National Park Conference held at the Battery Park Hotel, Asheville, N.C., September 2, 1925," North Carolina Park Commission Papers (hereafter NCPC Papers), Box V, File 13, GSMNP Archives; and *Asheville Citizen*, 3 September 1925.

[36]Ibid., 4 September 1925.

[37]*Knoxville News*, 27 July 1925.

Smokies boosters also began to take advantage of the talents and reputation of Horace Kephart. The *Asheville Times*, the *Knoxville News*, and the local Bryson City, North Carolina newspaper all published articles by Kephart on the importance of preserving the virgin timber of the Smokies and the economic benefits of national parks. William Gregg encouraged him to have the articles published in every paper in North Carolina and even agreed to finance any expenses involved up to $500.[38] Kephart's reputation as the author of *Camping and Woodcraft* and *Our Southern Highlanders* helped give the Smokies project not only local but national exposure.[39]

In August 1925 the Smokies project received a crucial endorsement, and a valuable convert. Arno Cammerer, Assistant Director of the National Park Service, visited the Tennessee side of the Smokies with David Chapman. Cammerer climbed Mt. LeConte, where he witnessed a spectacular sunset and sunrise, toured Cades Cove, and climbed Gregory Bald. After this three-day visit, Cammerer wrote to Park Service Director Stephen Mather telling him about his trip and giving his impressions. Cammerer emphasized the major point of his visit: determining whether the Smokies would "measure up to national park standards" for scenery and recreation potential. Cammerer included photographs to illustrate his point to Mather: "Most of the area is absolute virgin wilderness and presents particularly unique flora."[40] Cammerer concluded his report on a strong note arguing that the proposed national park area

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[38]William Gregg to Horace Kephart, 29 July 1925, Horace Kephart Papers, WCUSC.

[39]Horace Kephart, *Our Southern Highlanders: A Narrative of Adventure in the Southern Appalachians and a Study of Life among the Mountaineers*, (New York: Outing Publishing Co., 1913; reprint, Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), ix.

[40]Arno Cammerer to Stephen Mather, 19 August 1925, Box 302, File 204-020, RG 79, NA.

presented "scenery of such supreme character, nationally instead of locally considered, that it will measure from every standpoint up to the best in our national park system."[41] This report gave the Smokies project credibility where it counted. From this point on the National Park Service, and especially Cammerer, provided crucial support and encouragement for the project.

Another key endorsement came in September when Robert Sterling Yard, president of the National Parks Association, visited the Smokies for nine days. Yard had criticized the inclusion of cut-over lands in the Smokies and Shenandoah projects, and argued that the push to establish these parks had more to do with politics than with scenic values. Yard's influence in the scenic preservation movement made his support crucial to the national credibility of the Smokies project. Yard published his impressions of the Smokies in the November 1925 issue of *National Parks Bulletin*. Readers had to look no further than the title and subtitle of the article to get Yard's view: "A National Park In The Great Smoky Mountains: Reporting a Region of Lofty Mountains and Ridges, Deep Canyons, Many Waters, and Original Forest, which will Uphold in full Measure the Standards of the National Parks System, in which it will ably Represent the Characteristics of the Appalachian Mountain System." The article continued describing the imposing mountains, variety of flora, waterfalls and streams, and even the quaint and interesting mountain folk.[42]

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[41]Ibid.

[42]Robert Sterling Yard, "A National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains," *National Parks Bulletin*, 46 (1925): 3-6.

CHAPTER 5

CONVERTS AND CASH

With these important endorsements, the recent publicity, and the incorporation of booster organizations in both states, the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission began to ecourage boosters to launch a large-scale promotion and fund-raising campaign in Western North Carolina and East Tennessee. Members of the commission hoped that a successful drive would convince members of Congress that establishing national parks in the East was a viable proposition. The SANPC urged the boosters to complete the drive before it issued its report to the Secretary of the Interior, and before a bill was introduced into Congress.

On September 24 members of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association and Great Smoky Mountains, Inc. met in Knoxville. There they established an interstate committee to coordinate fund-raising efforts, and made plans to launch the North Carolina campaign in late November and the Tennessee campaign on December 7. David Chapman was named chairman and Plato Ebbs secretary.[1] On October 2 the group met again, this time in Asheville, and began negotiations with the New York firm of Tamblyn & Brown, who specialized in managing such endeavors for non-profit organizations.[2] On October 26 Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association and Great Smoky

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[1] *Knoxville News*, 25 September 1925; and Press Release, "From the Interstate Executive Committee of the Great Smoky Mountain Conservation Association of Tennessee and the North Carolina Park Commission," NCPC Papers, Box V, File 15, GSMNP Archives.

[2] *Asheville Citizen*, 3 October 1925.

Mountains, Inc. officially launched the fund-raising drive when they signed a contract with Tamblyn & Brown.[3]

An investigation by Tamblyn & Brown operative Charles Trimmer pointed out a major problem the enterprise would face: a lack of interest and willingness to contribute to the project by individuals outside of the park region, particularly in Tennessee. In his investigation Trimmer talked to prominent citizens in Nashville and Memphis and received little encouragement to extend the fund-raising campaign beyond the eastern end of the state. *Nashville Tennessean* editor Luke Lea, arguably the most powerful and influential man in the state, told Trimmer flatly: "Nashville people are not interested in this project. They never have been interested in it and they never will be interested in it, regardless of any kind of publicity campaign you might put on."[4]

In Memphis, Trimmer met with U.S. Senator Kenneth McKellar, who expressed his support for the project but echoed Lea's contention that boosters would have great difficulty in raising funds outside of the Knoxville area. Fund-raising in West Tennesssee would prove especially difficult, McKellar argued, as East Tennesseans had blocked an expenditure of federal funds for a Memphis viaduct. McKellar continued that private funding would never bring in sufficient funds and only large amounts of federal and state funding would make the park a reality.[5] E.H. Crump, Memphis political boss, told Trimmer that West Tennesseans felt much more kinship for Arkansans and Mississippians than for East Tennesseans. When Trimmer asked Crump if a dignified

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[3]A copy of the contract found in, GSMCA Papers, Box I, File 2, GSMNP Archives.

[4]Charles Trimmer to George M. Tamblyn, 6 October 1925, GSMCA Papers, Box I, File 3, GSNMNP Archives.

[5]Charles Trimmer to George O. Tamblyn, 9 October 1925, GSMCA Papers, Box I, File 3, GSMNP Archives.

campaign in Memphis might raise support for the project, Crump replied: "My dear sir, any campaign that could stir up interest for that project would have to be mighty undignified."[6]

Despite these limiting factors, the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, Great Smoky Mountains, Inc., and Tamblyn & Brown agreed to set a goal to raise $1 million for the campaign by March 1, 1926.[7] State and area goals reflected the differing attitudes toward the park in the two states. Each state had a goal of $500,000, but Knoxville would raise three-fifth's of Tennessee's quota--with an $85,000 credit for Knoxville's proposed contribution to the purchase of the Little River land--and the rest of East Tennessee would raise $200,000. North Carolinians set their goals at $250,000 for Asheville, $150,000 in the rest of Western North Carolina, and $100,000 for the rest of the state, reflecting the greater statewide appeal of the project.[8]

After setting these goals park boosters and the professionals from Tamblyn & Brown began a period of intensive organization preparatory to the start of the campaign in late November and early December. Each group put together lists of potential donors and ranked them according to their giving potential. Other groups began soliciting local civic groups to secure their endorsements and support. Finally, every county participating in

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[6]Charles Trimmer to George O. Tamblyn, 12 October 1925, GSMCA Papers, Box 1, File 3, GSMNP Archives.

[7]Contract between Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, Inc, Great Smoky Mountains, Inc. and Tamblyn & Brown, GSMCA Papers, Box 1, File 2, GSMNP Archives.

[8]*Knoxville Journal*, 5 November 1925; and *Asheville Citizen*, 5 November 1925.

the campaign was organized into a separate fund-raising committee with its own local goal, with smaller district committees within each county responsible for contacting fifteen to twenty potential donors.[9] Campaign organizers also set up women's committees to publicize the park and solicit funds from local women's groups.[10]

In further preparation for the campaign, boosters and Tamblyn & Brown professionals worked on every possible angle to promote the park and the campaign. Committees began to prepare booklets and leaflets to send to potential donors and local newspapers and distributed at fund-raising gatherings. The Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association published a thirty-two page booklet entitled, "Great Smoky Mountains." The booklet emphasized the worthiness of the Smokies as a national park site, the economic benefits that would come to East Tennessee when the Park became a reality, and tried to answer the criticisms of lumbermen and hunters. The booklet estimated that a national park in the Smokies would attract 500,000 tourists and bring at least $50,000,000 into the region annually. Photographs, most taken by Knoxville photographer Jim Thompson, exhibited the spectacular scenery of the region.[11] North Carolina's version, written by Horace Kephart and entiltled, "A National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains," hit the same themes as the Tennessee booklet, although Kephart placed major emphasis on the good roads the project would bring to the region. The North Carolina booklet also contained a number of photographs, these taken by

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9"Plan of Campaign: Great Smoky Mountain National Park Purchase Fund, Tennessee and North Carolina," GSMCA Papers, Box I, File 5, GSMNP Archives.

10"Great Smoky Mountain National Park Campaign: Memoranda on Women's Part in the Campaign," GSMCA Papers, Box I, File 7, GSMNP Archives.

11A copy of "Great Smoky Mountains" found in the GSMCA Papers, Box XII, File 32, GSMNP Archives.

Kephart's friend and camping companion George Masa, a Japanese immigrant and Asheville photographer.[12] Thompson's and Masa's photographs would play an important publicity role throughout the campaign to establish a national park in the Smokies.

Campaign organizers put together a variety of other materials to be used by campaign workers in their fund-raising efforts. They produced guidelines for speakers, giving them a brief history of the park movement, an explanation of the differences between a national park and a national forest, an explanation of the urgency of getting a bill before the current Congress, and the future plans for a nationwide fund-raising effort.[13] Knoxville organizers also came up with a list of suggested slogans for people to use as they solicited funds. These appeals focused on the economic benefits of a park to the region, and appealed to civic pride: "A dollar invested now in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Fund will bring a ten-fold return by 1927"; "Knoxville started the movement to establish a National Park in the Great Smokies, and Knoxville never started Anything it couldn't finish"; "If you believe that it pays to attract tourists to Knoxville and Eastern Tennessee, help create a National Park in the Great Smokies"; "California is richer by a million dollars every day because of its tourists. Tennessee will enjoy the same prosperity when the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is open."[14] Someone even wrote several songs promoting the Park and the fundraising campaign:

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[12]A copy of "A National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains" found in Horace Kephart Collection, WCUSC.

[13]"Suggestions for Speakers," GSMCA Papers, Box I, File 6, GSMNP Archives.

[14]"Suggested Slogans for use in Advancing the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Purchase Fund During Weeks of November 30th and December 6th," GSMCA Papers, Box I, File 7, GSMNP Archives.

We want a Park, a National Park
As Western people have,
One with big trees, flowers to the knees
As only Smokies have,
With mountains blue and scenic view
And all so wonderful and new -
We want a Park, a National Park
As Western people have.
(Sung to the tune of "I Want A Girl")

The Sun shines bright
On the Smoky Mountains Park
In summer the tourists are gay.
By'n by good roads will bring millions to our Park
And then all will prosper every day.
So work real hard, my lady,
And work men too, I say,
For the outlook's bright
For the Smoky Mountains Park:
The Smoky Mountains Park's not far away.
(Sung to the tune of "Old Kentucky Home")[15]

Campaign organizers designated the month of November as a period for intensive publicity for the Smokies and the fund-raising campaign. Both the Asheville Chamber of Commerce and the Knoxville Chamber organized motorcades to publicize their cities and the Smokies project. The Ashevillians toured the entire state, going all the way to Wilmington on the coast, while the Knoxville group focused its efforts in East Tennessee. The Asheville group, containing twenty-four cars, went to Charlotte, Wilmington, Raleigh--where Governor Angus McLean held a reception for the group--Durham, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, High Point, and concluded in Marion. Roger Miller and other leaders of the North Carolina fund-raising campaign rode in a limousine and distributed literature and set up displays of photos and maps at every stop. Various speakers, including William Welch of the Southern Appalachian National Park

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[15]"Great Smoky Mountains National Park Campaign Song Sheet," GSMCA Papers, Box I, File 7, GSMNP Archives.

Commission, Mark Squires, and N.C. State College President E.C. Brooks, addressed the hosts in each city emphasizing the benefits that would come to the entire state with the park.[16] In a letter to Representative Temple, Welch commented on the marked change in attitude that had occurred in North Carolina: "They are no longer skeptical and cold as they were on my last visit there--on the contrary, they are very enthusiastic and are arousing tremendous enthusiasm among all of the people."[17] The Knoxville group toured much smaller towns in East Tennessee such as Cleveland, Madisonville, Sweetwater, Lenoir City, Loudon, Maryville, and Athens. They also distributed literature and told listeners of the benefits--new roads, floods of tourists, and advertisement of the region--that would come with the establishment of the park.[18]

Boosters employed a variety of other means to publicize the Park and the fundraising campaign. Favorable editorials filled local newspapers, especially the *Asheville Citizen* and the *Knoxville Journal*, extolling readers with accounts of the fabulous scenery of the Smokies, and the economic potential of a national park. The November 1 *Knoxville Journal* contained a guest column on the front page written by nationally known magazine writer Rollin Lynde Hartt. Hartt had taken a trip through the Smokies in a limousine and recorded his impressions of the experience: "No where have I beheld anything so lovely and at the same time so majestic as these incomparable Great Smokies. Their veil of dreamy blue mists, their royal robes of primeval forest, their gracious contours, and their romantic mystery and splendor combine to set them off as altogether the most

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[16]*Asheville Citizen*, 11-16 November 1925.

[17]W. A. Welch to H.W. Temple, 11 November 1925, Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[18]*Knoxville Journal*, 22-24 November 1925.

enchanting scenery imaginable." And the results of establishing a national park in the Smokies would not only make the "thrilling sport of mountaineering by limousine" available to everyone, but the "enormous increase in tourist traffic" and the increased advertising for both states would bring tremendous business opportunities, even tempting many tourists to stay and make their homes in the region. The ultimate prize, however, according to Hartt, would come when the protection of the Smokies assured the success "of the hydroelectric projects which will develop an American Ruhr in this region."[19]

The *Asheville Citizen* emphasized the importance of the advertising the park would bring to the region: "Western North Carolina is going to grow according to the volume and the excellence of the advertising given her. . . . And now Western North Carolina is given a chance to secure the continuous service of the finest advertising agency on earth: the United States Government. By assuring establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, she can put Uncle Sam to work on the job of acquainting all nations of her beauty, grandeur, riches and opportunities."[20] The *Citizen*'s estimates of the amount of revenue a national park would generate for Western North Carolina rose higher and higher as the start of the fund-raising campaign approached. In a September 13 editorial the *Citizen* estimated that the park would bring $40,000,000 annually to the region.[21] By late November, on the eve of the kickoff dinner for the North Carolina

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[19]Ibid., 1 November 1925.

[20]*Asheville Citizen*, 9 November 1925.

[21]Ibid., 13 September 1925.

fundraising campaign, that figure had grown to $100,000,000.[22]

Both booster groups also held mass meetings to promote the campaign, particularly among area businessmen. On November 7 in a meeting with fifty leading businessmen from East Tennessee towns Knoxville Mayor Ben Morton called the establishment of a national park in the Smokies a "sound investment." Even if the park was never established, the advertising that the region received would well make up for any money spent on the process. William Welch elaborated on the same theme when he argued that "if you people take the money you spend annually in advertising and bought this park for a national playground, you would get an unequalled return on your investment."[23]

The kickoff dinner for the North Carolina campaign brought over two hundred people to the George Vanderbilt Hotel in Asheville. William Gregg made the keynote address and carefully explained the differences between the National Park Service and the Forest Service. In a direct challenge to local timber interests, Gregg argued that "the Forest Service could not 'just as well' handle the Great Smoky area."[24] The speech of Jim Stikeleather, District Highway Commissioner highlighted the evening. Stikeleather pointed out that three great epochs had marked Asheville and Western North Carolina's growth and progress: George Vanderbilt's decision to build an estate in the area, the coming of developer E.W. Grove to the region, and the building of the Battery Park Hotel. Stikeleather argued that the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park

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[22]Ibid., 23 November 1925.

[23]*Knoxville Journal*, 7 November 1925.

[24]William Gregg to H.W. Temple, 27 November 1925, Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

would usher in a greater period of prosperity than all of the previous three combined.[25]

The December 8 Knoxville kickoff dinner at the Civic Building attracted two hundred and fifty people. Cowan Rodgers argued that "this is Knoxville and East Tennessee's greatest opportunity to let the world know who we are, what we are and what we have to offer." When the park became a reality, Rodgers continued, "millions will annually come through our gates and scatter the golden sheckels in our midst." David Chapman stirred the crowd when he pontificated: "This is our time; this is our tide; it is impossible for us to fail."[26]

Just as the promotion phase had saturated the region with park propaganda, the campaign organization in place and ready to go, and as boosters had worked the Knoxville and Asheville communities into a fever pitch over the park, opponents of the project launched a major counterattack. On November 25, 27, and 29 the Champion Fibre Company placed full-page ads in the *Asheville Citizen* entitled, "The Champion Fibre Company And The Proposed Smoky Mountain National Park." Champion argued that the establishment of a national park in the Smokies would withdraw "for all time and regardless of changed economic conditions one of the very large natural resources of Western North Carolina from all industrial use."[27]

The company reminded area residents that Champion employed 2000 Western North Carolinians, and had 400 stockholders in the region. The establishment of a national park in the Smokies would threaten the livelihoods of these individuals. Champion

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[25]*Asheville Citizen*, 24 November 1925.

[26]*Knoxville Journal*, 8 December 1925; and Whaley, "A Timely Idea at an Ideal Time," 46-55 contains additional details of Knoxville's fund-raising efforts.

[27]*Asheville Citizen*, 25, 27, 29 November 1925.

pointed out that the region could not depend on tourism alone to bring prosperity, but needed a balanced economy that would include industrial activity. Turning the Smokies over to the Forest Service would benefit both tourism and industry, providing the recreational activities that would attract tourists, while allowing for scientific forest management and continued industrial use. The ad also contended that loggers had already cut over 75 percent of the Smokies, and the region no longer met the standards for national parks. Additionally, the Forest Service could purchase the land in its own right, under federal law, relieving North Carolinians of the burden of financing the purchase of land for a National Park. The ad concluded with a call for reflection: "Under all these conditions we feel that the people of Western North Carolina would do well to pause and consider whether a sufficiently careful analysis of all factors involved in this proposition has been made, before they take action which may commit them for generations to come."[28] A similar ad appeared in the December 6 edition of the *Knoxville Journal*, and an article in the December 12, 1925 edition of *Manufacturers Record*, entitled, "An Industrial Argument for the Smoky Mountain Forest Area," quoted extensively from the Champion ad.[29]

On December 6 two other lumber companies--the Whitmer-Parsons Pulp and Lumber Company of Swain County and the Suncrest Lumber Company of Haywood County--published a full-page ad in the *Citizen*. This ad echoed many of the Champion arguments, but made some additional points for consideration, particularly an assertion that park boosters had drastically underestimated the amount needed to purchase the land

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[28] Ibid.

[29] *Knoxville Journal*, 6 December 1925; and "An Industrial Argument for the Smoky Mountain Forest Area," *Manufacturers Record*, 17 December 1925.

for the park. While boosters asserted that they could buy the land for $10,000,000 or less, Whitmer-Parsons and Suncrest argued that "$15,000,000 would not buy the properties." The ad concluded with a plea for consideration of the effect of a national park in the Smokies on Western North Carolina timber company employees and their families:

> We furnish employment to over two thousand persons, who with their families would aggregate six thousand persons. If the Park goes through as proposed, the raw product [timber] that these two plants depend upon, will be segregated and operations will be crippled at one plant and destroyed at the other. Is it not an overwhelming responsibility to take the income away from six thousand persons and invoke visions out of the air to provide for them?"[30]

The campaign by the timber companies distressed park boosters and dramatically increased the challenge to meet fund-raising campaign goals, particularly in Western North Carolina. The *Knoxville Journal* reported that "the fundraising campaign in that region promises to be complicated by the organized opposition of certain lumbering interests, and by a battle royal between those interests and the hotel owners, the newspapers and the business interests of the cities of western North Carolina which are lined up firmly on the side of the national park."[31]

However, Western North Carolina Park boosters had come too far to back down, and responded aggressively to the timber company challenge in order to save both the fundraising campaign and the Smokies project itself. The *Asheville Citizen* led the charge with dramatic pictures, editorials, and cartoons. The November 29 edition of the *Citizen* contained dramatic "before and after" photos of logging operations. The "before" photo entiltled, "The Murmuring Pines and the Hemlocks," represented the

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[30]"Forestry - The National Park and Western North Carolina Prosperity," full-page ad in *Asheville Citizen*, 6 December 1925.

[31]*Knoxville Journal*, 1 December 1925.

"virgin growth untouched by axe and unmarred by the destructive march of the devouring hosts of the lumber industry." The "after" photo entilted, "Bleak Skeletons, Monuments to Lumbering," depicted the "naked skeletons of former sylvan monarchs, sacrificed to feed industry that eats without thought for the moment."[32] The same edition of the *Citizen* contained an editorial that challenged the Champion ad point by point.[33] On December 3, *Citizen* editor Charles Webb alleged that while the timber interests fought to retain access to the Smokies, 500,000 cords of pulp wood lay rotting on the ground in Swain County for lack of a market. He continued by calling the timber companies' push for a national forest a "smoke screen set up to allow the uninterrupted cutting of timber in the beauty spots of this section."[34]

Citizen cartoonist, Billy Borne joined the fray with front-page cartoons on December 8 and 9. The December 8 cartoon entiltled, "The Goose With the Golden Eggs," showed "Opposition" preparing to chop off the head of a goose labeled, "Proposed Smoky Montains National Park" with an axe marked "Selfish Interests." The golden eggs of "Tourists," "Prosperity," "Millions of Dollars Annually," and "Progress" lay scatterred on the ground.[35] The December 9 cartoon featured a "Lumberman" preparing to cut down a large fruit tree, with the fruit labeled "Tourists," "Progress," "Millions of Dollars," "Unexcelled Scenery," and "Motorists."[36]

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[32]*Asheville Citizen*, 29 November 1925.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid., 3 December 1925.

[35]Ibid., 8 December 1925.

[36]Ibid., 9 December 1925.

The *Knoxville Journal* also weighed in with an argument designed to provoke the ire of East Tennesseans against the timber interests. A December 10 headline read: "Smoky Deforestation May Ruin Power Sites." The article quoted State Geologist Hugh D. Miser as warning: "East Tennessee's magnificent prospects as a great industrial center, to follow the development in time of its more than a 1,000,000 potential hydroelectric power, is but a dream if the national park campaign fails."[37]

Despite the fight with the timber companies the fund-raising campaign proceeded as planned. Both states received a boost when the first town to launch its campaign, Bryson City, North Carolina, exceeded its quota on the first night by raising over $25,000 with over 200 citizens contributing.[38] Asheville launched its campaign on December 1, and by the end of the first phase of the campaign on December 19 had raised over $160,000, including $133.84 from Asheville's public school children.[39] Knoxville began its campaign on December 7, raised over $91,000 in thirty-six hours, and over $215,000 by December 20 with $12,000 given by Knoxville's banks.[40]

As park boosters canvassed Knoxville and Asheville, the *Asheville Citizen* and *Knoxville Journal* kept the campaign in the public eye. Both papers touted the benefits a national park would bring their respective areas from "unprecedented growth, development, progress, and prosperity," to increasing the membership of every church in the community, and even pleasing the average mother, who appreciates "the out of

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[37]*Knoxville Journal*, 10 December 1925.

[38]*Asheville Citizen*, 29 November 1925.

[39]Ibid., 19 December 1925.

[40]*Knoxville Journal*, 10 and 20 December 1925.

door playground for her children."[41] The papers used hard evidence from statistics on national park visitation, given by Stephen Mather in his annual report, and even flights of fancy to support the campaign. An *Asheville Citizen* editorial argued that a national park in Western North Carolina would "operate as splendidly and as incredibly as a modern combination of Aladdin's Wonderful Lamp, the touch of Midas, the Magic Urn and the weaving of straw into gold by Rumpelstiltskin."[42]

After the holiday season boosters renewed and expanded the campaign into the towns and communities surrounding Asheville and Knoxville. Campaign organizers received mixed results in surrounding communities with a few following the Bryson City lead and quickly subscribing their quotas. However, the process moved much slower in most towns, with overall apathy posing the primary problem.[43]

In Haywood County, North Carolina, the home of Champion Fibre Company and Suncrest Lumber Company, apathy seemed the least of the boosters' troubles. On January 27, boosters held a rally in Waynesville to kick off the Haywood County Campaign to raise its quota of $30,000. The meeting did not go according to plan, however, when Champion and Suncrest employees packed the hall and took over the meeting, turning it into an anti-park rally. W.J. Damtoft, Champion chief forester, addressed the group and recounted the economic damage in lost jobs and lack of opportunity that the establishment of a national park would bring to Haywood County.[44]

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[41]Ibid., 6 December 1925; and *Asheville Citizen*, 7 December 1925.

[42]*Asheville Citizen*, 13, 14, and 7 December 1925.

[43]Ibid., 8 January 1926; and *Knoxville Journal*, 13 January 1926.

[44]*Asheville Citizen*, 28 January 1926.

George "Bat" Smathers, a lawyer for Suncrest, turned the rally into something akin to a revival meeting when he argued that the "forces of evil" inspired all of this talk about recreation and pleasure seeking. He gave his own unique interpretation of the scriptural example of Adam and Eve, who, he asserted, were corrupted by being allowed to live a life of ease in the Garden of Eden. He concluded his talk by pounding the podium and shouting: "This mad age of pleasure and recreation is carrying us to hell as fast as possible!"[45]

However, this setback failed to deter park boosters and they planned another meeting for Haywood County on February 4. This meeting went much better for campaign organizers, and citizens of Haywood County "threw down defiance to the organized opposition to the movement" by pledging $10,000.[46] Indicative of the power of the arguments used by Park boosters, one month later Haywood County campaign organizers held a barbeque and victory rally at the Haywood County courthouse to celebrate reaching their $30,000 campaign goal.[47]

In the early part of 1926 Park boosters began to expand the publicity campaign beyond East Tennessee and Western North Carolina. The East Tennessee Chamber of Commerce organized a train tour to Florida, complete with the Knoxville High School band, to promote both tourism in East Tennessee and the park project. One hundred seventy boosters left Knoxville on January 31 for the seven-day promotional tour. The boosters took along an eagle captured in the Smokies as a mascot and planned to release it

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[45]Ibid.

[46]Ibid., 6 February 1926.

[47]Ibid., 5 March 1926.

in Miami. A member of the Knoxville High band even wrote a theme song for the tour:

> We're from Knoxville, Tennessee
> That's where all good folks ought to be.
> Although our present is cloudy, and our skies are dark,
> We're here to boost our Smoky Mountain National Park.[48]

David Chapman and other Park boosters joined the trip and handed out literature and spoke about the new proposed park at every stop.[49]

North Carolina boosters also expanded their efforts. On February 13, boosters held a mass meeting in Raleigh attended by many prominent North Carolinians, including Governor McLean. Former ambassador and Raleigh newspaper publisher Josephus Daniels gave the park project a strong endorsement calling it a necessity for the state.[50] In late March the Asheville Chamber of Commerce organized its own promotional tour to boost tourism and the park. The "Land of the Sky Goodwill Tour" took boosters on a special train to Atlanta, Birmingham, New Orleans, Houston, Dallas, and Oklahoma City.[51]

Despite these activities and promotions, however, both states fell well short of their goals. Boosters extended the original March 1 deadline for the end of the fund-raising campaign to April 1.[52] Members of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission urged campaign organizers to redouble their efforts, and feared that the campaign would

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[48]*Knoxville Journal*, 1 February 1926.

[49]Ibid., 1-7 February 1926.

[50]*Asheville Citizen*, 14 February 1926.

[51]Ibid., 23 March 1925.

[52]Ibid., 13 March 1926.

not reach its goal before Congress adjourned.[53] Harlan Kelsey warned the people of East Tennessee and Western North Carolina that "failure to put this thing through in the present congress means the death knell of the park program. . . . If we fail now, we are through."[54] In East Tennessee, David Chapman sounded the alarm. Headlines in the March 21 *Knoxville Journal* read "Chapman Declares Park Campaign Is Nearing Failure." In the accompanying article Chapman complained that while Knoxville carried the fund-raising load, apathy in the rest of East Tennessee threatened to derail the project.[55] An editorial in the *Knoxville Journal* challenged Knoxvillians to redouble their efforts: "Knoxville cannot afford to become a laggard and a civic slacker in the march of progress."[56]

The Knoxville community responded with a frenzy of activity to try to reach the Tennessee goal by April 1. Mayor Ben Morton termed the situation a "grave emergency" and called for a meeting of the presidents of every civic club, bank, Sunday school class, labor union, factory, fraternal organization, or missionary society at the Lyric Theater on March 11.[57] More than 300 Knoxvillians showed up for the meeting. The Knoxville High School band played and Mayor Morton, David Chapman, and W.P. Davis urged the crowd to canvass their membership to help meet the fund-raising goal. Boosters asked local ministers to observe Sunday, March 14 as "Smoky Mountains Sunday" and urge

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[53]*Knoxville Journal*, 5 March 1926.

[54]Ibid., 9 March 1926.

[55]Ibid., 21 February 1926.

[56]Ibid., 10 March 1926.

[57]Ibid., 7 March 1926.

their congregations to support the drive. Community Chest leaders agreed to postpone their annual fund-raising drive until after April 1. Russell Hanlon organized another motorcade to canvass surrounding towns, and Mayor Morton declared Tuesday, March 16, as Great Smoky Mountain National Park Day: "I call upon all citizens, so far as circumstances will permit, to lay aside their usual business and professional work on that day to devote it to the especial and particular business of procuring this national park."[58]

The people of Knoxville responded to the call. The Alex McMillan Realty Company published a full-page ad in the March 12 *Journal* pledging $10,000 to the park fund, if nine other firms in East Tennessee would do the same. The ad concluded with the challenge: "the Smoky Mountain National Park is the best investment ever offered to the people of East Tennessee. WE MUST NOT FAIL!!"[59] On Great Smoky Mountain National Park Day, canvassers received over $43,000 in pledges, and by week's end had raised $72,000.[60]

Money began pouring in from every direction. The bell boys at the Farragut Hotel lined up in military formation and each donated a dollar. Knoxville's African-American community contributed $170.50.[61] Students at nearby Carson-Newman College donated

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[58]Ibid., 13 March 1926; and "Great Smoky Mountain National Park Day: A Proclamation," GSMCA Papers, Box I, File 7, GSMNP Archives.

[59]*Knoxville Journal*, 12 March 1926.

[60]Ibid., 18 and 21 March 1926.

[61]Ibid., 19 March 1926.

$610, and students at Knoxville High School pledged $2490.[62] Boosters encouraged elementary school children, Boy, and Girl Scouts to rob their piggy banks and contribute all they could. The *Journal* recounted the story of one elementary age boy who wanted desperately to contribute $1 so he could receive one of the founders' certificates given to everyone who donated more than a dollar. Unfortunately, he only had ninety cents, until his little brother gave him a dime so he could get his certificate.[63]

As April 1 approached fund-raising activities became even more frenetic. The *Journal* published membership forms on the front page of the paper on March 26 for the "Unsolicited Club" for those who had not been approached to give. An individual could join by making a $5 pledge and sending in $1.[64] On the 28th the Alex McMillan company made its $10,000 pledge unconditional. The next day the Knoxville Clearing House, the organization that represented all of Knoxville's major banks, raised its pledge from $12,000 to $25,000. On the 30th, in the midst of a recall campaign, the Knoxville City Council voted unanimously to honor officially the earlier commitment to issue bonds worth $150,000 to pay for one-third of the Little River Lumber Company property initially made by the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce.[65] Finally, on April 3, the *Journal* announced that Tennessee had reached its quota.[66]

Park boosters in Asheville worked to meet the April 1 deadline as well. Although

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[62]Ibid., 24 March 1926.

[63]Ibid., 20 March 1926, 4-A.

[64]Ibid., 26 March 1926.

[65]Ibid., 28, 30, 31 March 1926.

[66]Ibid., 3 April 1926.

fund-raising in surrounding towns proved more effective in Western North Carolina than in East Tennessee--with Bryson City alone raising $47,500, almost double its quota--North Carolina passed the deadline still well short of its goal. On April 5, however, the Asheville Chamber of Commerce held a last-minute meeting, and raised the final $35,000 in only twenty minutes to put North Carolina over the top.[67]

The four-month fund-raising effort had accomplished much more than meeting campaign goals. The drive also attracted national attention to the Smokies. The December 30, 1925 edition of the nationally circulated magazine *The Outlook* contained an article by William Gregg, "Two New National Parks?" asking for national support for both the Smokies and Shenandoah projects.[68] Another national magazine, *World's Work*, published an article by Horace Kephart on the Smokies, "The Last of the Eastern Wilderness." The article, heavily illustrated with Jim Thompson photographs, concluded with a challenge to the nation: "Here today is the last stand of primeval American forest at its best. If saved--and if saved at all it must be done at once--it will be a joy and a wonder to our people for all time. The nation is summoned by a solemn duty to preserve it."[69] The park campaign also attracted several favorable articles and editorials from the *New York Times*.[70]

Most important, however, the campaign energized both communities in support of the

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[67]*Asheville Citizen*, 2 and 6 April 1926.

[68]William Gregg, "Two New National Parks?," *The Outlook*, December 1925, 662-66.

[69]Horace Kephart, "The Last of the Eastern Wilderness," *World's Work*, April 1926, 617-32.

[70]*New York Times*, 25 January and 28 March 1926.

park effort and threw back the very serious challenge mounted by Western North Carolina timber and pulp companies. Although the arguments used by boosters might not have pleased purists, the promotion and fund-raising campaign had created thousands of passionate converts to the Smokies project and, to some extent, at least, to the cause of scenic preservation. Despite the successful fundraising drive and the enthusiasm for the park that had developed in the region, however, boosters knew they could not bring the project to a successful conclusion alone.

CHAPTER 6

POLITICAL ALLIES

On the heels of the successful fund-raising campaign in Western North Carolina and East Tennessee, the focus of the movement changed from promotion to politics. The popularity of the park project captured the attention of legislators in both states. Indeed, the political times favored the consideration of an issue such as the establishment of a national park. Tennessee and North Carolina both had strong "business progressive" governors in Austin Peay and Angus McLean, who were amenable to funding public service projects, although McLean only supported the park when under intense pressure. The park issue also appealed to "business progressive" politicians in both states because of the purported profits from tourist revenues--both in taxes and income to constituents--generated by a national park.

The political climate in both states helped the park movement tremendously. In the U.S. Congress the influence of Tennessee and North Carolina Senators and Representatives due to their seniority helped the project gain congressional support and recognition. In North Carolina, the one-party system almost insured that once plank pledging support for the park project made it into the Democratic Party platform that the state legislature would take favorable action.[1] The unique political environment in Tennessee also helped, as Governor Peay used his support of the park movement to

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[1]Key, *Southern Politics*, 345 and 212-13.

garner support in traditionally Republican East Tennessee.[2]

As soon as it became apparent that the fund-raising campaigns in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia--Virginia national park boosters had raised $1.2 million to purchase land for Shenandoah National Park--the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission issued a report to Secretary of Interior Work recommending both Shenandoah and the Great Smoky Mountains as national park sites. Fearing that the legislative session would end before Congress could pass favorable legislation, Work rushed a report on the two potential parks to both houses of Congress on April 13, 1926.[3] Representative Temple introduced a bill (69th Cong., H.R. 11287) into the House on the next day, where it was referred to the House Committee on the Public Lands.[4] On April 23, Senator Claude Swanson of Virginia introduced an identical bill (69th Cong., S. 4073) into the Senate on behalf of himself and Senator Carter Glass of Virginia, Senators Furnifold Simmons and Lee Overman of North Carolina, and Senators Kenneth McKellar and L.D. Tyson of Tennessee. This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Public Lands and Surveys.[5]

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[2]Joseph T. MacPherson, "Democratic Progressivism in Tennessee: The Administration of Governor Austin Peay" (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1969), 331-32.

[3]*Asheville Citizen*, 15 April 1926.

[4]Congress, House, Committee on the Public Lands, *Hearings before the Committee on the Public Lands, House of Representatives, Sixty-Ninth Congress, First Session, on H.R. 11287*, 69th Cong., 1st sess., 11 May 1926.

[5]Congress, Senate, Committee on Public Lands and Surveys, *Hearings before the Committee on Public Lands and Surveys, United States Senate, Sixty-Ninth Congress, First Session, on S. 3176, S. 3427, S. 3428, S. 3433, S. 4073, S. 4209, S. 4258, and H.R. 9387*, 69th Cong., 1st sess., 27, 29 30 April, 11 and 12 May, and 2 June 1926.

The bill itself called for the establishment of national parks in the Blue Ridge area of Virginia and in the Great Smoky Mountains when the states had purchased a minimum amount of suitable land. In order for the Smokies to come under the administration and protection of the National Park Service, Tennessee and North Carolina would have to purchase and turn over to the federal government 300,000 acres, within a 704,000 acre area designated by the Secretary of the Interior. The bill contained two important provisos, however. First, the federal government could buy none of the land. Second, the National Park Service could not undertake general development of either park until "a major portion of the remainder of such area shall have been accepted" by the Secretary of the Interior. For the Smokies this meant that the Park Service would only provide basic fire protection and law enforcement until the states had turned over 502,000 acres.[6]

The bill immediately drew protests from park boosters. Many misunderstood and thought that they had to acquire all of the 704,000 acres which included several areas with large settlements, especially in Tennessee. This would make it extremely expensive to purchase the requisite land, and according to David Chapman "stirred up a hornet's nest here and a lot of resentment" among homeowners in the area.[7] Others pointed out that the minimum requirement of 300,000 acres would also prove an impediment to establishment of the park. The fund-raising campaign had set up a schedule whereby subscribers did not have to make their final payment until after the

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[6]Congress, Senate, *A Bill to provide for the establishment of the Shenandoah National Park in the State of Virginia and the Great Smoky Mountain National Park in the States of North Carolina and Tennessee, and for other purposes*, 69th Cong., 1st sess., S. 4073.

[7]David Chapman to Glenn S. Smith, 20 April 1926, Box 25, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

government established the Park. If boosters could not collect on these pledges, they could not hope to purchase such a large amount of land.[8]

Before the bill came to the respective committees for consideration, park supporters won an important victory which further strengthened their cause in Congress. At its convention in late April, the North Carolina Democratic Party considered the possibility of inserting a plank in the party platform in support of the park. The *Asheville Citizen* immediately understood the significance of this action: "Should a plank endorsing the Great Smoky Mountain Park be inserted in the State Democratic party's platform, it would mean the absolute assurance of the park for Western North Carolina, since the Democratic party's endorsement in North Carolina means the execution of the plan immediately following the general election."[9] On April 29 State Senator Plato Ebbs used his leverage to secure the party's support. The simple wording of the endorsement belied its significance: "The efforts of the state should be further exerted toward making the Smoky Mountains National Park an accomplishment."[10]

The park bill came before the House Committee on the Public Lands for consideration on May 11, 1926. The proceedings began with a statement by Representative Temple, who explained the investigative work and recommendation of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission. He also told of the local financial support of the projects through the successful fund-raising drives in Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina, and spoke about the adoption of a pro-park plank in the North Carolina Democratic

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[8]Ibid.

[9]*Asheville Citizen*, 29 April 1926.

[10]Ibid., 30 April 1926.

party's platform as indicating "an appropriation of a considerable amount from the State treasury." Temple emphasized that the addition of these two new national parks would cost the federal government nothing until the states turned the land over "in fee simple" to the Secretary of the Interior. At the conclusion of Temple's report, Representative Abernethy from North Carolina, a member of the Committee on the Public Lands, introduced an amendment to the bill that would reduce the minimum acreage in the Smokies for Park Service administration from 300,000 acres to 150,000.[11]

Several others followed up on Temple's remarks. Representative Weaver accentuated the importance of protecting the Smokies because of its importance as a watershed for an area of great potential water power development, the small population in the proposed park area, and the close proximity of the park to the center of population. William Welch told of the plans to launch a national fund-raising campaign to raise additional funds for both Shenandoah and the Smokies averring: "I have practically been assured now as much money from people at large as has already been contributed by those two States." David Chapman argued that most of the people living in the designated park area, especially the area most likely included in the park, worked at temporary jobs in lumber camps. Chapman also spoke on behalf of Representative Abernethy's amendment, telling the committee of the difficulties involved in procuring 300,000 acres as a minimum area. Mark Squires spoke next and assured the committee that the State of North Carolina would make a sizable appropriation for securing park land. The session concluded with comments from Shenandoah proponents and a summation giving the Park Service's stamp of approval to the project by Arno Cammerer. The committee then went into executive session where it amended the bill to reduce the minimum acreage in the

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[11] *Hearings of House Committee on the Public Lands*, 11 May 1926, 4-9.

Smokies and voted the bill out for consideration by the full House.[12]

The Senate Committee on Public Lands and Surveys held hearings on the same day. The process moved more slowly as members debated whether they should include a provision in the bill to make sure that the land donated for the parks should be contiguous and compact. Several Senators from western states had witnessed the significant problems of parks that had extensive inholdings. Senator George Williams of Missouri protested the attempt of park supporters to push the bill through too quickly: "while I am in sympathy and in hearty accord with this movement, I shall not be stampeded or rushed until we have a thorough understanding here in the record of what this thing really is."[13]

The Senate committee meeting turned into a much more free-wheeling affair than the more formal House hearing, with give and take between park supporters such as Senator Swanson from Virginia, Senators Overman and Simmons from North Carolina, Stephen Mather, and William Gregg and members of the committee. Committee members wanted assurances that these parks actually had a chance of becoming viable and comparable to the western parks, and that the federal government would not have to pay any money for land in these parks. Finally, the committee delayed action until the next day.[14]

The hearing began with Senator McKellar's introduction of the amendment added to the House bill on the previous day. After a good deal of discussion the committee approved the amendment so that the bills in both houses would have identical wording, so as to

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[12]Ibid., 9-33.

[13]*Hearings before the Senate Public Lands Committee*, 11-12 May 1926, 107-33.

[14]Ibid.

avoid any delay in putting the bill through a conference committee. The only significant opposition in the Senate committee came when Senator Robert Stanfield, the chairman, read a telegram sent by the Champion Fibre Company. The company emphasized the hardship that a national park in the Smokies would place on the company, if it lost its primary source of timber which "can not be replaced." The telegram continued: "We do not oppose the park idea in principle, but feel that a location could and should have been selected which would not have involved such serious industrial interference nor such tremendous costs of acquisition."[15] Surprisingly, Champion's telegram elicited no comment from the Senators, and the commitee wound up the proceedings, went into executive session, and voted the amended bill out to the Senate floor.[16]

The amended bill sailed through both houses on May 14, and President Coolidge signed it into law (69th Cong., 44 Stat. 616) on May 22. The *Asheville Citizen* hailed the event: "We are dazed with victory. . . . We have acquired a gold mine--an inexhaustible gold mine in the park. . . . Why the very passage of the measure has given us a wealth of the best publicity."[17]

Several factors combined to help move the park bill through Congress so rapidly. First, the establishment of the park had strong bipartisan support. J. Will Taylor served as a member of the Republican National Committee and the referee of patronage in Tennessee.[18] H.W. Temple also commanded a good deal of respect in Republican circles.

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[15]Ibid., 142.

[16]Ibid., 142-44.

[17]*Asheville Citizen*, 16 May 1926.

[18]*Knoxville Journal*, 27 March 1926.

Democratic Senators Claude Swanson and Furnifold Simmons held high positions in the Senate due to their seniority, and Kenneth McKellar served on the Senate Appropriations Committee. The yoking of the Great Smoky Mountains project with Shenandoah also helped the bill get through. This gave the bill the backing of three congressional delegations and greatly improved the odds of passage. Indeed, the six Senators from the three states had combined for eighty years of Senate experience, and one of those, Senator Tyson from Tennessee, had served in the Senate only one year.[19]

Unquestionably the fund-raising and political activities within the individual states also helped the bill. The $1.2 million raised by Shenandoah boosters in Virginia, the $1 million plus raised by Smokies boosters, the national publicity generated by these drives, the option on the Little River land gained by the Tennessee legislature, and the adoption of a pro-park plank by the North Carolina Democratic Party helped convince members of Congress of the sincerity of all three states in seeing these parks become a reality. Perhaps most important, however, the passage of this bill cost Congress nothing. Any money that Congress would have to spend on these areas would come well down the road when, and even if, the Secretary of the Interior accepted the land for national park purposes.

Both states celebrated the joint victories in meeting their fund-raising goals and in getting the park bill through Congress in high style. Tennessee boosters held a victory banquet with over two hundred people attending on May 28 at the Whittle Springs Hotel. Governor Austin Peay delivered the keynote address and maintained: "The Park is going to be Tennessee's greatest advertising asset. No one can estimate what it will be worth to

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[19]*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774-1989* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989).

Tennessee in wealth or population."[20] Knoxville boosters presented David Chapman with a loving cup designating him as the "Hero of the Hour." In his acceptance of the trophy Chapman asserted that they had completed the greatest part of the work and the establishment of the park was mainly a matter of routine.[21]

North Carolina boosters held their banquet on July 21 at the Battery Park Hotel in Asheville. Arthur W. Page, son of Walter Hines Page and editor of the national magazine *World's Work*, gave a strong aesthetic and emotional argument concerning the human need for national parks: "It [the park] is a part of saving our souls. It is one of the pieces of equipment in the fine art of living. It is a part of the intellectual overhead of civilization. This overhead I believe to be the most essential part of our civilization." The highlight of the festivities came when Mark Squires presented to the City of Asheville the pen used by President Coolidge to sign the park bill into law.[22]

With at least some money in hand and now with official Congressional go ahead, park boosters began to concern themselves more actively with actually purchasing land for the park. In a late June meeting, the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission issued a set of guidelines for buying land to Mark Squires of the North Carolina Park Commission and to David Chapman of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association. The commission suggested that the groups first buy those lands "typifying the best national park features of the region." They encouraged Squires and Chapman to try and buy land along the main ridge of the Smokies as well as spur ridges and canyons

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[20]*Knoxville Journal*, 29 May 1926.

[21]Ibid; and Whaley, "A Timely Idea at an Ideal Time," 56-57.

[22]*Asheville Citizen*, 22 July 1926.

lying between Mt. Guyot and Gregory Bald. Squires presented a motion that gained unanimous approval that both state organizations should begin obtaining options on park land at once.[23]

Squires also brought to the attention of the commision the problem in both states of speculators buying up land in the Park area in hopes of making a large profit. The commission issued a strong statement discouraging speculation which newspapers published throughout the region:

> It is not the intention of the associations representing the three States [representatives of the Shenandoah National Park Association were also involved in this meeting] to pay high prices for lands which have been recently purchased for the purpose of speculation or which are being held at speculative prices. It is the intention however to acquire ultimately all of the land prescribed by the Act, and it is hoped that these lands may be acquired by private negotiations if possible without recourse to the power of condemnation. The Commission is pleased with the results already attained by the three park associations and it hopes a very fine sense of justice and reason will respond to their further endeavors to secure the land.[24]

The *Asheville Citizen* and the *Knoxville Journal* went on the offensive decrying speculation in the park area. On July 23 both papers had front page pieces blasting land speculators. The *Citizen* quoted Mark Squires as warning that speculation in the park area would seriously damage the chances of Western North Carolina ever getting a park.[25] The *Journal* contained a front-page cartoon headlined, "Don't Block The Way," which showed a line of cars headed for the mountains. However, a large tree labeled,

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[23]"Minutes of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission, June 29-30, 1926," Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[24]Ibid.

[25]*Asheville Citizen*, 23 July 1926.

"Buying Land in Park Area For Speculation," blocked the road leading into the park.[26] The *Journal* followed this cartoon with one on July 25 headlined, "The Way Not To Get A National Park." This cartoon depicted a man marked, "$peculator," greedily eyeing a mountainous area labeled, "Lot$ For $ale."[27] The *Journal* also published a copy of a letter from Secretary of the Interior Work to W.P. Davis concerning the dangers of land speculation: "If there should be a considerable area secured by private holders in your proposed park, either for summer homesteads or for speculative purposes, it will very definitely injure the prospects for further government aid in securing a national park for Tennessee."[28]

Aside from attacking land speculators, both Great Smoky Mountains, Inc. and the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association hired field agents to begin surveying land and examining titles in the designated park area of both states. Great Smoky Mountains, Inc. hired A.C. Shaw, a former land buyer for the Forest Service, who had wide experience in surveying, estimating values, searching titles, and buying land in Western North Carolina.[29] The Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association hired Knoxvillian General Frank Maloney, an early proponent of the Park project, an experienced civil engineer and an individual who had camped and hiked in the Tennessee Smokies since

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[26]*Knoxville Journal*, 23 July 1926.

[27]Ibid., 25 July 1926.

[28]Ibid., 12 August 1926.

[29]*Asheville Citizen*, 23 July 1926.

1896.[30]

In August 1926 headlines in the *Knoxville Journal* expressed the optimism of park boosters in both states: "Chapman Declares Park Assured." The accompanying article quoted Chapman as challenging any doubters: "A Great Smoky Mountain national park of at least 235 square mile, within the states of Tennessee and North Carolina, is assured beyond any doubt, notwithstanding reports to the contrary." Chapman continued by arguing that the money already raised would prove sufficient to buy the required minimum area of 150,000 acres.[31]

However, as opponents of the park movement once again went on the offensive, Chapman's words contained more fantasy than fact. On September 6, 1926, Jim Wright--an attorney for the Little River Lumber Company, a landholder in the Park area, and a staunch supporter of making the Smokies a national forest rather than a national park--organized a meeting of road builders and property owners in the Smokies at the Appalachian Club in Elkmont. Over two hundred people attended the meeting including C.N. Bass, Tennessee State Highway Commissioner; Jim Stikeleather, a member of the North Carolina Highway Commission; East Tennessee Division Engineer Frank Webster; Roscoe Marvel, Western North Carolina developer and owner of the Kenilworth Inn in Asheville; Little River Lumber Company president W.A. Townsend; and "mountaineers from every hill and cove in the Smokies."[32]

Wright organized the meeting to promote the building of roads into the Smokies area.

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[30]*Knoxville Journal*, 8 August 1926; and Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 36.

[31]*Knoxville Journal*, 8 August 1926.

[32]*Knoxville News*, 7 September 1926.

He told the crowd: "It is my ambition to put a road into every cove and valley, and up every mountain. And as long as I can get the money for the work I intend to do it."[33] Wright also promoted the idea of running several major highways over the Smokies connecting North Carolina and Tennessee. One speaker from North Carolina asserted that he had built a road into a virtually worthless piece of mountain property and had increased its value to $1000 an acre.[34]

Park boosters reacted in horror at the prospect of such a road building program. They feared that roads built into the region would boost the value of mountain property so much that the states could not afford to buy the land, thus killing, or at least seriously delaying, the park project. The *Knoxville News* spelled this out in capital letters on the front page of its September 7 edition: "AND IF ROADS ARE BUILT IN THE PARK AREA BEFORE THE LAND IS BOUGHT FOR PARK PURPOSES, THE VALUE OF THE LAND WILL BE ENHANCED AND THE PUBLIC OF KNOXVILLE AND TENNESSEE AND NORTH CAROLINA AND OTHER STATES WILL HAVE TO DIG DEEPER INTO THEIR POCKETS." The *News* pointed out that spending money on land for the park would prove the wisest course: "For we know that if we get the park, the federal government will build the roads--and fine ones!"[35]

To be sure, Wright's plan threw a serious roadblock in the way of park boosters, and provided a glimpse of the future when Wright would serve as the chief antagonist toward the Tennessee park movement. Wright had attended the first Knoxville booster gathering organized by W.P. Davis back in 1923, but had dropped out of the group when it became

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[33]*Knoxville Journal*, 9 September 1926.

[34]*Knoxville News*, 7 September 1926.

[35]Ibid.

apparent that Davis's interest lay in promoting a national park, and not a national forest. Observers have attributed Wright's long and continued fight against the park to a variety of factors. Wright himself often referred to his love for the mountain people and his fears that a national park would displace them. He also often spoke about the waste of money in buying land for a national park when the federal government would buy the land if it became a national forest. However, Wright also had a major financial interest in seeing the Little River land become national forest land instead of national park land. Wright had earlier negotiated an option with the Forest Service to purchase the Little River land and stood to gain a sizeable commission if the sale went through. However, the withdrawal of the Forest Service from the region eliminated this prospect. In addition, Wright held a good bit of property in the Elkmont area and he hoped to boost the price through the road building campaign. David Chapman even attributed Wright's opposition to the park movement to a rivalry that had developed between the two when they pledged the same fraternity at the University of Tennessee.[36]

Wright's skills as a lawyer and his powerful political connections throughout the state made him a formidable opponent, especially as his oppostion to the park became somewhat of an obsession as the years passed.[37] The *Knoxville News* best summed up Jim Wright's attitude when it wrote: "The park project is dear to the hearts of the

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[36]Wright's views on the Park movement and his oppostion are contained in a self-published book, *Great Smoky Mountains National Park: Statement of Jas. B. Wright of Knoxville Tennessee Elicited by the Park Investigating Committee Appointed by the Sixty-Sixth General Assembly (1929) under House Resolution No. 21, the Senate Concurring*, Box 307, File 608, RG 79, NA; also see Macpherson, "Democratic Progressivism," footnote on page 333.

[37]Ibid.

people of Tennessee and North Carolina. But it is not dear to the heart of Jim Wright."[38]

An even more immediate threat to the Park movement, however, came out of Wright's Elkmont meeting, when W.A. Townsend announced that he was not bound by the option secured by the Tennessee legislature for the Little River Lumber Company land in the previous year. Townsend declared that the option had expired before the state accepted it, and although he had given a verbal commitment he argued: "There is not a pen scratch on paper anywhere." Townsend also expressed his frustration with dealing with park supporters: "What has become of the national park? Where are the leaders of this park movement? If there are any, why aren't they doing something?"[39]

Indeed, Jim Wright had picked an ideal time to launch this attack on the park. David Chapman had left on an extended vacation in Europe in August to recover from the previous exhausting year of promotion and fund-raising and did not plan on returning until October.[40] Governor Peay had just completed the toughest battle of his political career, defeating Hill McAlister in the August Democratic primary by some 8000 votes. Peay's victory, however, provided good news for park supporters as the narrow triumph resulted from a 29,731 to 13,831 vote in East Tennessee.[41]

Peay's support for the park movement had paid major political dividends as he won sixty-eight percent of the East Tennessee vote in the 1926 Democratic Party primary as

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[38]*Knoxville News*, 7 September 1926.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 45.

[41]David D. Lee, *Tennessee in Turmoil: Politics in the Volunteer State, 1920-1932* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979), 64-75.

opposed to finishing a weak third in a four man field with twenty-seven percent of the vote in 1922. To be sure, Peay owed a major political debt to East Tennesseans who had saved him from defeat by a McAlister candidacy backed by the powerful E.H. Crump machine of Memphis and *Nashville Banner* publisher E.B. Stahlman's Nashville machine.[42]

When Peay learned of the Elkmont meeting and the statements of Col. Townsend, he immediately began to pay on that debt. Peay dashed off a letter to Townsend the day after the meeting:

> I am greatly disturbed by reports seen in the press purporting to be some remarks of yours at a recent road meeting. My dear Colonel, the whole country is looking at Tennessee now. The park is practically assured. For you to refuse you option would be disastrous. You are a part of that scheme. It means so much to the fine standing and regard for you by all of our people in future years. Don't let yourself, I beg, turn away from the culmination of this project.[43]

Peay's letter had the desired effect and on September 10 the *Knoxville Journal* reported that Townsend had declared himself an "advocate and friend" of the park and ready to begin negotiations to complete the purchase of the Little River land.[44]

Despite Frank Maloney's assurances to Arno Cammerer that negotiations should go off with "no hitch," and that the state would complete the purchase in thirty days, Townsend did not transfer the deed until March 22, 1927.[45] Peay met with Townsend on

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[42]Ibid.

[43]Austin Peay to W.B. Townsend, 7 September 1926, Little River Lumber Company Papers (hereafter LRLC Papers), Box I, File 17, GSMNP Archives.

[44]*Knoxville Journal*, 10 September 1926.

[45]Frank Maloney to Arno Cammerer, 11 September 1926, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 7, GSMNP Archives.

September 21 and Townsend agreed to keep the price the same as in the previous agreement. They met again after the November general election and finalized terms on the agreement after Townsend had resubmitted the matter to his board of directors. After they renegotiated the deal it took several months to search the title as over 300 individuals had previously owned parts of the land. Peay finally signed a warrant to release the state's share of the purchase price and the Knoxville City Council gave final approval to the release of its share in late February 1927.[46]

Just when it seemed that the purchase would finally go through, after two-and-one-half years of negotiations, opponents filed a taxpayer suit arguing that the purchase of the land was illegal under the terms of the Tennessee state legislature's act to accept the the Little River option on April 10, 1925 (Chapter 57 of the Acts of 1925). The claimants maintained that the bill only allowed the state to purchase the land for national park purposes. Since the Little River Lumber Company had retained timber rights on part of its land, they could not convey the title in fee simple as the National Park Service required; and therefore the land could not be used for national park purposes for fifteen more years. The Davidson County, Tennessee chancery court immediately placed an injunction on the purchase. The state finally got the injunction lifted on March 22 and the $273,557.59 purchase price--$182,371.73 from the State of Tennessee and $91,185.86 from the City of Knoxville--transferred to Colonel Townsend and the 76,507 acre tract finally belonged to the state.[47] Park opponents appealed to the State Supreme Court and almost two years and two new legislative actions later (Chapter 54,

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[46]*Knoxville Journal*, 9 September 1926, 13 November 1926, 16 and 26 February 1927.

[47]Ibid., 19, 22, and 23 March 1927.

Acts of 1927 and Chapter 1, Acts of 1929) saw the suit finally dismissed.[48]

Chapman hailed the purchase as clearing the way for "an early realization of the project," despite the cloud of litigation, criticism from some circles concerning the retention of timber rights by Little River, the purchase of cut-over land, and accusations that the state had paid too high a price. Chapman defended the transaction on all counts, arguing that even when the Little River Lumber Company concluded its cutting 10,000 acres of virgin timber would remain on the tract. In addition, the purchase price of $3.57 an acre fell far below the average price of $4.96 an acre paid by the Forest Service for similar lands in the Southern Appalachians between 1912 and 1925. As for cut-over lands, Chapman asserted that people should consider most of the Little River land "second growth lands" which rivaled "in beauty and majesty the virgin areas."[49]

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[48]L.D. Smith, Attorney General, "In the Supreme Court of Tennessee at Nashville, December Term, 1928, Charles E. Malone, et al. Appellants, vs. Austin Peay, et al., Appellees, reply Brief in Behalf of the Governor, Secretary of State, and Treasurer of Tennessee, Appellees," LRLC Papers, Box I, File 19, GSMNP Archives.

[49]*Knoxville Journal*, 22 and 27 March 1927.

CHAPTER 7

STATE FUNDING

Although a great deal of progress had been made to solidify the park project, boosters still had only about one-tenth of the funds in-hand necessary to buy the minimum area to establish the park officially. Attention now focused on both state legislatures to contribute significant amounts of the needed funds. The willingness of "business progressives" in both states to fund public service projects proved invaluable, although opposition and indifference challenged park supporters' funding schemes in both states.

Even as Tennessee finally concluded the Little River purchase North Carolina moved ahead with significant legislative support for the park project. During the later months of 1926 Mark Squires, Plato Ebbs, and E.C. Brooks began preparing legislation to introduce in the general assembly's upcoming session. The bill called for a $2 million bond issue to provide money to purchase land for the park. Brooks also urged that the Commission launch a publicity campaign, giving greater attention to the potential economic benefits that a national park would bring to the state.[1] On January 27, 1927 the bill received a crucial endorsement from U.S. Senator Furnifold, the undisputed leader of the North Carolina Democratic Party, who pledged his "whole hearted support" for the park movement and encouraged the legislature to pass the bond bill.[2]

Despite Simmons's support, however, park boosters still lacked the crucial

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[1]Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role," 174.

[2]*Asheville Citizen*, 27 January 1927.

endorsement of Governor Angus McLean, who remained at best lukewarm to the project. North Carolina Park Commission chairman Mark Squires, who had developed an intense dislike for McLean, did not improve matters when some of his derogatory comments made it back to the Governor.[3] The Western North Carolina timber industry also pressured McLean to oppose the bond issue. A.M. Kistler echoed the timber interest line when he wrote to McLean telling him about copper deposits that miners had discovered in the park area, advising him: "I cannot help but feel that economically it is wrong to establish a park at that particular point, from a State standpoint solely."[4] Champion Fibre Company president Reuben Robertson wrote to the governor telling him that the federal government might not accept the Little River lands and that the "same uncertainty would probably rise with reference to lands purchased in North Carolina." Robertson urged the governor to remain neutral on the issue as this matter was "manifestly a proposition which the Legislature should consider on its own responsibility."[5]

Park boosters went on the offensive to try and push McLean off the fence. *Asheville Citizen* editor, Charles Webb, wrote: "The time has come when you must take some position in the matter. Your friends here in Western North Carolina are certainly expecting it. We have stood by you in every way possible and it will be sore disappointment to all of us if you do not help us now. The fact is, the success of this

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[3]J.D. Murphy to E.C. Brooks, 19 January 1927, E.C. Brooks Collection, NCPC Papers, Box IX, File D, Duke University Special Collections Library, Durham, North Carolina (hereafter DUSC).

[4]A.M. Kistler to Angus McLean, 3 February 1927, Governor Angus McLean Papers, NCSA.

[5]Reuben Robertson to Angus McLean, McLean Papers, NCSA.

measure now depends absolutely upon your taking a positive position in favor of it."[6]

Supporters set up a joint session of the state legislature on February 3 and brought in Representative Henry Temple, Arno Cammerer, and William Welch to speak to the group. Temple talked of the peace and security found in the Smokies that he had found nowhere else. He also told the legislators that the closeness to population centers would make the Smokies a "Mecca for tourists" and that the state would soon recoup any expenditure from gasoline taxes collected from tourists. Cammerer pointed out the recent boom in national park visitation and emphasized that while western parks attracted millions with only a summer season, the Smokies would be open almost year round. He argued that while the federal government asked the state to come up with $2 million to purchase land, when the Park Service took possession of the land they would develop it and build roads. Welch told of the scientific importance of the Smokies, the importance of preserving them as a living laboratory, and the eagerness of wealthy philanthropists to contribute to the project.[7]

On February 3 Plato Ebbs from Asheville introduced the bond bill into the Senate and Harry Nettles from Buncombe County and Mark Squires--formerly a state senator but now a representative--submitted the bill to the House. Legislative leaders scheduled discussion of the bill for a joint session of the Senate and House appropriations committees on February 8. Boosters called on all park supporters to attend this session. Park boosters appealed to forty different organizations in Asheville and Western North Carolina to "be on hand to extol its [the bill's] merits." The Chamber of Commerce organized a special train to take supporters to Raleigh, and the *Asheville Citizen*

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[6]Charles Webb to Angus McLean, 31 January 1927, McLean Papers, NCSA.

[7]*Asheville Citizen*, 3 February 1927.

considered this a "crisis time" and a "case of now or never with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The fate of this project so tremendously potent of good for North Carolina will be decided by the Legislature within a few days. If the decision is favorable to the measure appropriating $2,000,000 to buy park lands the park will become a reality; if it is unfavorable the park will never be more than a faded dream."[8]

Governor McLean met with Park boosters on the morning before the committee meeting. The group implored him to come out in favor of the proposition. Asheville attorney J.D. Murphy, unable to attend the meeting, wired the governor begging him to "Please rise to the occasion."[9] Charles Webb, in Florida at the time, also sent a telegram putting the proposition in no uncertain terms: "Your personal friends in Western North Carolina who supported you in your primary campaign and have loyally stood by you since you have been governor feel that you should now stand by them. Your failure to actively support park matter will mean its defeat and no power on earth can keep them from blaming you for it."[10] Despite this pressure, McLean maintained his silence.

Even without McLean's support park boosters gained a partial victory at the joint appropriations committee meeting. The meeting lasted over three and one half hours with speeches by both park boosters and opponents. Lawyers of the Champion Fibre Company, led by Haywood Parker, provided the only public opposition to the bill. The

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[8]Ibid., 4, 5, 8 February 1927.

[9]Telegram, J.D. Murphy to Angus McLean, 8 February 1927, McLean Papers, NCSA.

[10]Telegram, Charles Webb to Angus McLean, 8 February 1927, McLean Papers, NCSA.

Citizen did report, however, that twenty to twenty-five timber company lobbyists, including former State Highway Commissioner and park booster Joseph Hyde Pratt, had actively worked the halls and lobbies in the days before the meeting. At the conclusion of the meeting House Appropriations Committee members disappointed park boosters by deferring action on the bill until they could study it further. However, a 14 to 7 favorable vote by the Senate committee encouraged them.[11]

The next two weeks provided a roller coaster ride for Park proponents as the fortunes of the park bill waxed and waned. On February 12 Governor McLean went to Washington to meet with Governor Peay, Secretary Work, and officials of the National Park Service. McLean told reporters he only sought information on the park issue, and expressed his concern that the legislature might appropriate money to buy land for a park that might never come into existence. He wanted assurances that if North Carolina appropriated money that Tennessee would match it and that the federal government would accept the land already acquired by Tennessee. He also wanted information from Secretary Work and from the Park Service as to the amount of virgin forest the land must contain and how much of the total area each state had to purchase.[12] Despite receiving the written assurance of Secretary Work that he would direct the National Park Service to make a study of the area "as soon as weather conditions will permit" to answer McLean's questions, the governor told reporters that he would make no endorsement of the bill and would leave it for the legislature to decide, "especially as it involves an appropriation

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[11] *Asheville Citizen*, 9, 10 February 1927.

[12] Ibid., 13 February 1927; and Angus McLean to Charles Webb, 4 February 1927, McLean Papers, NCSA.

which only the General Assembly can make."[13]

Park boosters became increasingly discouraged with McLean's recalcitrance, the continued delays in the House, and even feared that a seemingly endless stream of damaging amendments jeopardized approval in the Senate. Finally on February 15 park proponents amended the bill so that funds would become available only after adequate funds had been assured to purchase enough land "for general development for National Park purposes"--by the Secretary of the Interior's definition this meant 427,000 acres. The amendment required the North Carolina Park Commission, the governor, and the Council of State to certify this fact before the state would issue its bonds. The bill's supporters added provisions allowing the Park Commission to gain injunctions against timber companies to prevent them from cutting timber on proposed park lands, and allowing the Commission to begin condemnation suits immediately.[14]

The amended bill quickly gained Governor McLean's approval, which assured its passage. Indeed, many opponents, and perhaps the governor himself, gave their support because they believed that the new conditions would never be met. The bill passed the Senate on February 16 with only one dissenting vote and passed the House on February 22; Governor McLean signed it on February 25. Asheville attorney Walter Haynes acclaimed the passage of the bill as "the crowning triumph for North Carolina's good roads system."[15]

In addition to the $2 million bond issue, the bill gave the eleven-member North

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[13]Hubert Work to Angus McLean and Austin Peay, 12 February 1927, McLean Papers, NCSA.

[14]*Asheville Citizen*, 16 February 1927.

[15]Ibid., 17, 23 February 1927.

Carolina Park Commission the power to buy land for park purposes. The commission also received the crucial power of eminent domain which allowed it to "condemn for park purposes land and other property."[16] In March the commission held a meeting where it dissolved Great Smoky Mountains, Inc. and transferred all of the records and funds to the commission.[17]

The passage of the North Carolina bond bill put the onus on the Tennessee state legislature to follow suit, especially as the issuance of North Carolina bonds depended on the procurement of sufficient monies to complete the park. Intense fighting in the legislature between Peay supporters and Crump and Stahlman's anti-administration forces heightened the pressure. Park boosters feared that the anti-administration group would fight any park bill simply because the Governor supported it. To make matters worse, Governor Peay suffered a mild heart attack in February right after his return from the Washington conference with Secretary Work and Governor McLean, and therefore went to Florida to recuperate for several weeks.[18] Park supporters rushed to introduce a bill as the legislative session neared its end and lawmakers would not meet again for two more years, two years in which the entire Park movement could die.[19]

During Peay's convalescence, Knoxville park boosters worked with lawyers to draw

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[16]Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role," 174-75.

[17]"Minutes of Meeting of N C Park Commission," 18 March 1927, Parks ORC, File 136, NCSA.

[18]Macpherson, "Democratic Progressivism," 337-40; and Lee, *Tennessee in Turmoil*, 76-78.

[19]David Chapman to Henry Colton, 1 April 1927, GSMCA Papers, Box VII, File 11, GSMNP Archives.

up a bill similar to the recent North Carolina park bill. The North Carolina Park Commission agreed to give Tennessee a $500,000 credit for the purchase of the Little River land, and so the bill asked the legislature for a $1.5 million bond issue.[20]

The bill immediately received some crucial endorsements. A Knoxville delegation met with Peay on March 30, and the governor gave his public support.[21] U.S. Senator Kenneth McKellar telegraphed his endorsement on April 2. Although McKellar had consistently supported park legislation in Congress some questioned whether he would support the bill, inasmuch as he had very close political connections to the anti-administration group, particularly E.H. Crump. Park boosters began to hope that the park bill would survive the bitter political infighting when others close to the anti-administration group voiced their support.[22]

However, some members of the anti-administration faction saw this as an opportunity to strike a blow against the governor. The *Nashville Banner*, E.B. Stahlman's paper, called the Little River purchase a political payoff for East Tennessee's support for Peay in the last election. Indeed, Peay had benefitted tremendously from East Tennessee support both in the tight primary race, and in the November general election when he became the first Democratic gubernatorial candidate to win the popular vote of East Tennesseans over a Republican candidate since the Civil War. Others tried to cause dissension by accusing park supporters of trading votes with the anti-administration group to insure passage of the Park bill. One state senator called the

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[20]Ibid.

[21]*Knoxville Journal*, 30 March 1927.

[22]Ibid., 3 April 1927.

park a "fairy dream [on a] goat hill [in a] far corner" of the state. A member of the House declared that "I do not believe the State's financial condition is such to make a gift to the Federal Government for a playground for idlers at the expense of the tax payers of the State."[23]

In order to combat opposition to the park bill, Knoxville boosters relied on two old tactics: bringing out the heavy artillery for a joint session of the legislature and inviting the legislature to visit the Smokies. Legislative leaders called the joint session on the eve of the trip to the Smokies. Representative Temple, William Welch, and Arno Cammerer replayed the speeches that they had delivered to the North Carolina General Assembly. The high point of the proceedings came when Josephus Daniels urged the Tennessee legislature to "Preserve for all time a place remote from the city life, where men may refresh their souls and commune with their Maker. Let us look to the hills from whence cometh our help."[24]

On the morning of April 16 the University of Tennessee band greeted the special train bringing eighty to ninety legislators to the Smokies. Boosters attempted to keep the trip as non-partisan as possible. Governor Peay did not make the trip due to his health and fears of antagonizing anti-administration legislators. Knoxville boosters took the group in a "gigantic motor cavalcade" to the top of Rich Mountain for lunch overlooking Cades Cove where, according to the *Knoxville Journal*, "the adjectives expended exceeded those encompassed in Webster's unabridged." The group then received a motorcycle escort to

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[23]MacPherson, "Democratic Progressivism," 338-41.

[24]*Knoxville Journal*, 15 April 1927.

the Mountain View Hotel in Gatlinburg.[25]

That night park supporters hosted a banquet at the hotel with several speaking on behalf of the so-called "Match North Carolina Bill." U.S. Representative J. Will Taylor reminded the legislators: "You have heard of what North Carolina has done in this matter. Remember, if you will, that we are the child of that great state, and is it meet that the child should falter? Any that do are mighty poor children, and if we can't do as well as the Old North state or improve on her actions, we are mighty poor children." Mark Squires hit the same note when he challenged the group: "Shall it go unheeded that we [North Carolina] threw the torch?" In a surprise move, W.P. Haynes, leader of the anti-administration forces was called upon to speak. Haynes did not give his endorsement, but did give boosters hope for a fair hearing when he commented: "This proposition does not smack of politics, and for that reason it shall be considered solely on its merits."[26]

The next day a few of the hardier legislators hiked to the top of Mt. LeConte, but most took an auto trip to Elkmont. Much to the chagrin of park bosters someone had posted signs along the way reading: "Inside Park Area: Will Our Homes Be Condemned?"[27] W.P. Davis made an attempt at "damage control" when the group arrived at Elkmont, telling the legislators: "In no case will a resident of the area be forced out of his home. To the contrary, all residents will be urged to remain, and will in most cases be

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[25]Ibid., 17 April 1927; and Whaley, "A Timely Idea at an Ideal Time," 63-64.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 52.

employed by the park."[28]

Despite Davis's efforts, however, once the legislature returned to Nashville the issue of what would happen to the people living in the park area became a major issue. Jim Wright and fellow attorney John Jennings, also a property owner in the Elkmont area, used the image of the state forcibly removing poor mountaineers from their homes as an effective weapon in their lobbying efforts against the park bill. The *Knoxville Journal* quoted Rufus Hommel, an orchard owner at Elkmont, as telling a group of legislators that the people of the mountains did not want the park, because it meant "running them out of their homes and the return of the vacated areas to a howling wilderness."[29]

On April 19 park boosters amended the bill to eliminate the most populated areas within the 704,000 acre area designated by the Secretary of the Interior from the power of eminent domain. The areas immune from condemnation proceedings included Wears Valley, the Cherokee Orchards, the summer cottages at Elkmont, Gatlinburg, Sevierville, and the Indian Gap area. The amendment included a provision for a Tennessee Park Commission, the seven members to come from the three-member Tennessee Park and Forestry Commission, with the governor appointing the four additional members.[30]

The amendments quieted much of the opposition, but the park bill still had several hurdles to clear before becoming law. Park boosters were encouraged when the bill passed the Senate on April 21 by a 23 to 8 margin. However, the next day the bill

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[28]*Knoxville Journal*, 18 April 1927.

[29]Ibid., 20 April 1927.

[30]Ibid.

became involved in a major controversy in the House when someone placed a copy of the 1924 bill introduced into the U.S. Senate by former Tennessee Senator John Shields on every member's desk. The bill had called for the purchase of land by the federal government under the Weeks Law to create a national park in the Smokies under the administration of the Department of Agriculture. An anonymous note accompanied the copies of the bill encouraging the Representatives to delay their action and push Congress to pass the Shields bill so that the land could be acquired at no expense to the state. The note also called for the governor to sell the Little River land to the Agriculture Department to recoup the state's and Knoxville's bond investment. The *Journal* and many others credited Jim Wright with this action. Unfortunately for the opposition, park boosters got in touch with Senator Shields, who immediately telegraphed the Speaker of the House: "I now favor the bill before you, believing it to be the only hope for a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains."[31]

On the eve of the vote in the House, a new problem faced the park boosters when Governor Peay vetoed the general appropriations bill that his opponents had pushed through the legislature. Peay vetoed the bill, and even threatened to issue an injunction stopping payment on the bill if the legislature overrode his veto, because it gave a $750 bonus to each state legislator. The *Knoxville Journal* reported: "Smoky Montain National park legislation is riding the top of a volcano tonight and its eruption may prove disastrous in the extreme."[32]

Although the crisis delayed the vote on the park bill one day as the Legislature voted to override Peay's veto, it did not have an adverse effect on the final outcome. The bill

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[31]Ibid., 23 April 1927.

[32]Ibid., 25 April 1927.

passed the House by a healthy margin--60 to 33--on April 26, and Governor Peay signed it into law on the next day (Chapter 54, Acts of 1927). Once again park boosters celebrated. The front page of the *Knoxville Journal* contained a cartoon showing a sun rising over the mountains labeled "Success" with a long line of cars headed for the mountains. A front-page editorial in the same issue maintained that "it would be no hectic dream or stretch of fancy to predict that in less than ten years from the time a national park is open to the world Knoxville will have a population of 200,000." A local real estate company even placed an ad in the paper reading: "If You Had A Dollar's Worth Of Knoxville Real Estate Yesterday. It's Worth $1.50 Today."[33]

Despite the euphoria of the moment and the realization that much had been accomplished in the past year, the political battles of 1926 and 1927 had taught park boosters that the road to Great Smoky Mountains National Park would be a rough and long one indeed. Although they now had commitments of almost $5 million, most of the money would not become available until the states had enough money on-hand to complete the project. Although the state of Tennessee now held title to 76,000 acres of potential park land, a taxpayers suit under appeal to the State Supreme Court hovered. Most important, however, boosters in both states knew that despite recent victories, that serious, determined, and well financed opposition to the park in both states would continue.

Park supporters also sufferred a damaging loss in October 1927, when Austin Peay died of a cerebral hemorrhage. Peay's replacement, Speaker of the Senate Henry Horton, lacked both Peay's commitment to the park project and his administrative abilities.[34] E.H. Crump was purported to have assessed Horton's abilities by arguing: "If one of the

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[33]Ibid., 27 April 1927.

[34]Lee, *Tennessee in Turmoil*, 76-114.

learned mathematical professors were to condescend to throw away much time in discussing temporary Governor Horton, he would no doubt brand him the square root of zero."[35] Under Horton, the park issue, and particularly the membership on the Tennessee Park Commission, would become a political football.

With these uncertainties in mind, the fight to establish a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains moved out of North Carolina and Tennessee in a search for wealthy individuals who might provide the needed money to help make a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains a reality.

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[35]William D. Miller, *Mr. Crump of Memphis* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 160.

Chapter 8

AN EARLY CHRISTMAS

Despite the successful fund-raising drives and the passage of bond issues by both state legislatures, park boosters realized that they would have to go outside of their states to secure the additional $5 million needed to buy the land required for the park. Boosters tried a variety of tactics to attract outside monies, all to no avail. In late 1927 it appeared that they would fall far short of their fund-raising goal and the project would die. However, at the point when all attempts to attract large donations had seemingly failed, the park movement received a tremendous boost. In early 1928 John D. Rockefeller, Jr. made a $5 million matching grant through the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund. This grant virtually assured the establishment of the park and brought the power and influence of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and the Rockefeller Foundation squarely behind the park project, providing invaluable assistance in overcoming immediate and future obstacles.

From the very beginning of the park movement the National Park Service and boosters attempted to interest wealthy Americans in making large donations to the project. In the words of Carlos Campbell, they searched for a "Santa Claus."[1] Stephen Mather tried to use his influence to bring in some large donations. In February 1925 he wrote to George Eastman urging him to consider securing the large property holdings of

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[1]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 59.

the Champion Fibre Company, because "I know your love for the primitive forests."[2] Mather also tried to interest his fellow alumni of the University of California-Berkeley in buying the area around Mt. LeConte from Champion in honor of former UC professor of geology Joseph LeConte. Both these endeavors produced no money, with Annie Florence Brown of the UC alumni association responding that most of the alumni would "consider the amount rather impossible for us at so great a distance from the desired object."[3]

Park boosters also tried to interest corporations and wealthy individuals in the project. W. P. Davis attempted to get the Aluminum Corporation of America to donate some of its large holdings in the Smokies to the park as a way of protecting their water supply. Davis assured ALCOA president Arthur Davis that "a National Park surrounding your dams and locks would be the greatest protection you could possibly have, and that protection you would always have."[4] Russell Hanlon, secretary of the Knoxville Automobile Club, sent W.P. Davis a newspaper clipping concerning New York millionaire Leopold Schepp, who publicly requested help in dispensing with his fortune. Hanlon suggested that a committee go to New York and approach Schepp as "the Great Smoky Mountain National Park would be a wonderful place for him to put some of his surplus money, as it would thus provide a recreational area for all of Eastern America, and would

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[2]Stephen Mather to George Eastman, 20 February 1925, Box 306, File 604, RG 79, NA.

[3]Annie Florence Brown to Stephen Mather, 1 June 1926, Box 306, File 604, RG 79, NA.

[4]W.P. Davis to Arthur Davis, 28 May 1928, W.P. Davis Papers, Box I, File 13, GSMNP Archives.

be a lasting monument to his memory."[5] Davis encouraged Mark Squires to approach the Duke family for a substantial contribution. He argued that since they would certainly like to perpetuate the name of Duke in honor of recently departed family patriarch James B. Duke, "it would be an appealing thing to say to the Duke family, that if they made a very substantial contribution, say a million or more dollars for the park fund, that Indian Gap would be called 'Duke Pass.'"[6]

One of the grander schemes of park boosters involved their attempt to interest Henry Ford in the project. In October 1926 when Ford visited Lincoln Memorial University, a delegation from Knoxville drove a fleet of Lincoln cars to the campus at Harrogate, Tennessee. The group persuaded Ford to visit the proposed park area the next day, but Ford reportedly seemed uninterested in the project.[7]

The Southern Appalachian National Park Commission had given primary responsibility for securing large pledges on the national level to W. A. Welch. As general manager of the Palisades Interstate Park, Welch knew many wealthy northeastern philanthropists, especially those with an interest in preservation projects. In the midst of the fundraising campaigns in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia boosters formed the Appalachian National Parks Association, Inc. to facilitate fund-raising for the proposed Great Smokies and Shenandoah national parks. The group chose Welch as chairman and gave him the responsibility of raising funds for both parks among the

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[5]Russell Hanlon to W. P. Davis, 27 July 1925, W.P. Davis Papers, Box I, File 13, GSMNP Archives.

[6]W.P. Davis to Mark Squires, 27 October 1925, W.P. Davis Papers, Box I, File 13, GSMNP Archives.

[7]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 59-60; and Whaley, "A Timely Idea at an Ideal Time," 60.

eastern elite.[8]

Welch continually assured park boosters, Park Service officials, and members of Congress that large contributions would soon be forthcoming. Indeed, in September 1927 he told Cammerer that he had twenty people interested in the project, and expected to receive pledges of about $2 million.[9] However, in January 1928 Welch dropped a bombshell on the project and brought it to its lowest point since 1924. In a letter to Secretary Hubert Work he resigned as a member of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission and announced: "I have not collected any money or secured any definite pledges."[10] Arno Cammerer wrote to David Chapman and expressed his consternation: "At present we are all a bit stunned and confused, such a complete failure on the part of one man is incomprehensible."[11]

Fortunately for the park project this period of confusion and frustration lasted less than a month as Cammerer personally rescued the project. Even before the Welch debacle Cammerer had worked to secure contributions from wealthy individuals. He operated, however, strictly outside of his official capacity as Assistant Director of the National Park Service, as he wrote to David Chapman: "My position is a peculiar one. I am not acting in these contacts officially, as you know. . . . I am not to be seen on the

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[8]A copy of the incorporation papers for Appalachian National Parks Association, Inc. found in Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[9]Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, 14 September 1927, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 10, GSMNP Archives.

[10]W.A. Welch to Hubert Work, 10 January 1928, Box 24, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[11]Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 10, GSMNP Archives.

surface, because the Department's attitude necessarily is that they have no official connection until the park is handed them on a silver platter, so to speak."[12] As Cammerer worked behind the scenes in late 1927 and early 1928 the North Carolina and Tennessee Park Commissions secretly paid his travel and entertainment expenses.[13]

Beginning in May 1927 Cammerer kept up a running conversation with John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and his representatives, encouraging him to make a sizable contribution to the Park effort. Cammerer met personally with Rockefeller on August 4, 1927 and "filled his briefcase with all the photographs of the Big Smokies I had collected."[14] Rockefeller expressed interest in the project and at this point the courtship began in earnest. Cammerer kept up a steady stream of correspondence with Rockefeller emphasizing the urgency of securing land in the Great Smokies before the timber companies cut over all of the virgin forest. Cammerer told Rockefeller that "sixty odd acres of primeval forest land included in the proposed park boundaries are being cut each day, in the lumberman's anxiety to get all the timber possible off the land before it is acquired for park purposes."[15] On September 26, 1927 Cammerer's efforts paid dividends as Rockefeller pledged $1 million to the project, and promised to provide an additional $500,000 if others pledged $3 million before January 1, 1928. Rockefeller

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[12]Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, 14 September 1927, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 10, GSMNP Archives.

[13]David Chapman to Arno Cammerer, 10 January 1928, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 10, GSMNP Archives.

[14]Arno Cammerer to Mark Squires, 5 August 1927, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 8, GSMNP Archive.

[15]John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to W. A. Welch, 26 September 1927, Rockefeller Family Archives (hereafter RFA), R.G. 2, Cultural Interests Series, Box 93, Folder 853, Rockefeller Archives Center, Pocantico Hills, New York (hereafter RAC).

urged secrecy, "so as not to run up the price of these lands," and speed, "so as not to delay for one unnecessary day the continuing destruction of primeval forest land which the park embraces."[16] On November 14 Cammerer obtained a pledge for $50,000 from Edsel Ford, who promised that he would give more if the Park Service had not secured the full amount by the middle of 1928.[17]

After the Welch announcement Cammerer began to work feverishly to save the subscriptions already pledged, took a leave of absence from the Park Service, and went to New York City, promising Chapman "I'll do my damndest, and angels can't do more."[18] Cammerer's efforts produced more than even angels could have expected. On January 23, 1928 Rockefeller wrote to Cammerer and offered to withdraw his $1 million pledge, but match the gifts of both states dollar-for-dollar, totalling either $4.5 million or $5 million, to purchase the necessary acreage for the park. Rockefeller proposed to make this gift through the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial and asked only that the Park Service place a tablet honoring his mother in the park containing the words: "This Park is given, one-half by the peoples and commonwealths of the States of North Carolina and Tennessee, one-half in memory of Laura Spelman Rockefeller."[19]

Cammerer immediately began preparations to receive the gift. He wrote to Chapman and Squires on January 28 telling them that an individual had offerred the gift, but did

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[16]Ibid.

[17]Chronology entitled "Great Smoky Mountains National Park," 5 June 1963, RFA, R.G. 2, Cultural Interests Series, Box 93, Folder 853, RAC.

[18]Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, 12 January 1928, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 10, GSMNP Archives.

[19]John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to Arno Cammerer, 23 January 1928, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Archives (hereafter LSRM), Series 3, Box 13, Folder 143, RAC.

not reveal the name of the donor. He also explained the conditions of the gift--made as a memorial "to an individual, now deceased, who possessed a lovely Christian character," that a memorial tablet be placed in the Park, and the nature of the inscription--and asked them to inquire in official channels if their states would accept such a gift.[20] With an enthusiastic response from these two, Cammerer proceeded to organize a three-member board of trustees consisting of himself as chairman, Chapman, and Squires to receive and disperse the donated funds.[21]

Throughout the month of February both sides worked out the details of the bequest, and on March 6 Kenneth Chorley, Rockefeller's "point man" on conservation and preservation projects, traveled to the region to tie up loose ends and be on hand for the public announcement of Rockefeller's gift. Cammerer accompanied Chorley on this trip. Chorley first met with Governor Henry Horton, the State Treasurer, and members of the Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission in Knoxville to insure that the state would make bond funds available for the project, to check estimates on the cost of land, and examine evidence of the availability of locally raised funds.[22]

Finding the Tennessee situation acceptable, Chorley and Cammerer traveled on to Raleigh to meet with Governor Angus McLean and the North Carolina Park Commission. Mark Squires met them and informed them that the governor was obstructing the issuance of the state's park bonds. Squires told the men that the governor "had been

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[20]Arno Cammerer to Mark Squires, 28 January 1928, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 143, RAC.

[21]Trustees of the Great Smoky Mountains Memorial Fund to The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, 11 February 1928, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 143, RAC.

[22]Kenneth Chorley to Arthur Woods, 9 March 1928, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 143, RAC.

playing with the lumber interests and was now embarrassed by the influence exerted by them."[23] On the next day Chorley and Cammerer met with the governor, who apologized for the delay but argued that he had to make sure that the state had complied with all of the provisions of the bond act and that the project had a reasonable chance of success. McLean fimrly asserted that his slowness of action did not in any way demonstrate a lack of interest or disapproval of the project. Chorley later recollected that "this statement was repeated so many times that one could not help but question its sincerity."[24]

At this point the Rockefeller bequest paid its first major dividends as the sheer weight of the gift, the power of the Rockefellers, and now the fullfledged support of the National Park Service virtually forced Governor McLean to order the issuance of the bonds. McLean had tried to delay the process further by calling for a meeting of all of the principal participants in Washington in a week or two before he released the bonds. Cammerer replied that he saw no need for such a meeting and that "every day's delay meant further cutting of virgin timber."[25] Chorley clinched the matter and backed McLean into a corner when he asserted that the Trustees of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial were satisfied that the project would succeed and that "the only thing remaining to be done to make the Memorial's pledge fully operative was the issuance of the North Carolina State Bonds."[26] Faced with the fact that he and he alone obstructed the entire project, McLean turned to his Attorney General and gave his assent

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[23]Ibid.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

to release the bonds. Given the fact that the public announcement of the Rockefeller bequest had occurred two days previously, McLean had little choice.[27]

The public disclosure of the Rockefeller gift set off celebrations in both states. As Chorley reported: "Knoxville went wild with excitement. It could be compared with nothing but Armistice Day."[28] Knoxville newspapers published extra editions, factories blew their whistles, and churches rang their bells. The *Asheville Citizen* reported: "Universal joy reigns in Asheville and all sections of Western North Carolina . . . the mountain metropolis was suddenly surcharged with an atmosphere of confidence in itself and its future the like of which has never been felt here before."[29] The *Charlotte Observer* burst into psalm over the gift: "Praise be to the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Fund, the Smoky Mountains National Park is saved!"[30]

Crowds mobbed Chorley everywhere that he went with people asking him to convey their appreciation to Mr. Rockefeller. This reception moved Chorley to write in his report on the trip:

> Measurement of the relative value of gifts of money is perhaps hopeless and useless, but I cannot help but have the feeling that this gift and the way it was made is one of the best things the Memorial has ever done. It has placed Mr. Rockefeller Senior and Mr. Rockefeller Junior and the Memorial in an extremely high position in a section of the country where apparently very little was known of their work, and probably less of an understanding of the high accomplishments they have in mind, to say nothing of the joy and happiness that the establishment of this Park will bring into the lives of so many people.[31]

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[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Asheville *Citizen*, 8 March 1928.

[30]Ibid, 9 March 1928, 4.

[31]Chorley to Woods, 9 March 1928.

Making this dramatic, and even project-saving gift, however, did not end Rockefeller involvement in the project. Although Rockefeller himself did not take a particularly active role with the Park, his associates, particularly Chorley, kept close tabs on the project to insure the success of the endeavor. As historians of Rockefeller philanthropy John Ensor Harr and Peter Johnson observed, with Rockefeller "giving was not easy or frivolous, but painstaking in the extreme, . . . he insisted on full value and careful accountability in every financial transaction."[32]

The question remains, however, as to why John D. Rockefeller, Jr. made such a magnanimous gift to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park project. Rockefeller did not fall in love with the Smokies as he did with Mount Desert Island in Maine--which became Acadia National Park--or the Grand Tetons, where he built family homes. Indeed, while Rockefeller enjoyed his few visits to the Smokies, these came at infrequent intervals. He never took as intense a personal interest in the Smokies themselves as he did with Acadia--where the Park Service allowed him to pursue his passion for road building--and Grand Teton National Parks--where he bought a ranch and built the world famous Jackson Lake Lodge. With this in mind it seems strange that Rockefeller gave more money for the Smokies project than for any of his numerous other conservation projects.[33]

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[32]John Ensor Harr and Peter J. Johnson, *The Rockefeller Conscience: An American Family in Public and Private* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1991), 7-8.

[33]For discussions of Rockefeller's other conservation projects see: Stephen Fox, *John Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1981), 218-23; Raymond B. Fosdick, *John D. Rockefeller, Jr.: A Portrait* (New York: Harper, 1956); and Robert W. Righter, *Crucible for Conservation: The Struggle for Grand Teton National Park* (Boulder: Colorado Associated Univerisities Press, 1982).

For Rockefeller, however, involvement in the Smokies project was natural for a number of reasons. First, Rockefeller had an intense love of nature and indeed gave more to conservation projects than any other individual in history. He donated tens of millions of dollars to Acadia, Grand Teton, Yosemite, Yellowstone, Sequoia, and Shenandoah National Parks, to Mesa Verde National Monument, to the Palisades Interstate Park, and to the Save-the-Redwoods League.[34] In addition, several of Rockefeller's largest conservation projects involved saving virgin timber from destruction. Rockefeller gave $2 million to save the California coast redwoods and $1.65 million to save the sugar pines of Yosemite.[35] The need to save the last great area of virgin timber in the eastern United States from the timber companies, therefore made the Smokies a particularly attractive project.

The southern location of the Smokies also made the project one that would attract the Rockefeller attention. By 1921 Rockefeller had already given over $130 million to the General Education Board to finance the construction of new primary and secondary schools in the South, to subsibize southern teachers' colleges, to promote scientific farming methods in the South, and especially to improve the quality of education for southern African-Americans. He spent additional millions through the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission for the Eradication of Hookworm Disease to improve sanitation and health care in the South.[36] The purported economic benefits that a national park would bring to the region undoubtedly served as a major selling point for Rockefeller

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[34]Fosdick, *John D. Rockefeller, Jr.*, 302.

[35]Ibid.

[36]John Ettling, *The Germ of Laziness: Rockefeller Philanthropy and Public Health in the New South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 77-93, 222-23.

involvement in the project.

Whatever the reasons for Rockefeller's decision, his gift saved and assured the success of the Park project at a time when it most likely would have died, especially with the Great Depression on the near horizon. The Rockefeller money and the clout of the Rockefeller Foundation, both in business and government circles, put the project so far down the road as to assure that, despite continued opposition and significant obstacles to overcome, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park would indeed become a reality.

CHAPTER 9

HARD FOUGHT VICTORIES

Despite the optimism and enthusiasm generated by the Rockefeller gift the actual purchase of the land for the park proved far more difficult than anyone could have envisoned. Before the two park commissions could buy land they first had to survey it, cruise it in order to estimate the value of the timber, investigate the title, and make an estimate of its value. In all too many cases, especially with the large timber companies, they then had to go into court for a condemnation hearing. In many of these cases one, or both sides, appealed the decision to a higher court further delaying the process. The time and expense involved often frustrated park boosters, especially when the coming of the Great Depression severely taxed the financial resources available to the two state park commissions. To complicate matters further, opposition to the park project did not end with the Rockefeller bequest, causing both park commissions to become embroiled in political battles generated by timber interests and political upheaval in both states. As a result, it was only after twelve years and two financial bailouts by the federal government that the park commissions and the National Park Service could purchase enough land for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to become an official reality.

Even before the Rockefeller donation both states had put organizations in place to carry out the work of purchasing land for the park. The North Carolina General Assembly had empowered its state park commission to purchase land in the name of the state in March of 1927. Later that year the North Carolina Park Commission hired former Forest Service employee Verne Rhoades, an early opponent of the park project,

as executive secretary to head up the land purchasing process.[1] Tennessee converted its three-man State Park and Forestry Commission into the seven-man Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission in August of 1927. After much debate over the composition of the commission--David Chapman argued that the commission should be dominated by Knoxvillians who had "done practically all of the work"--Governor Peay appointed the three members of the old commission, former mayor of Knoxville, Ben Morton, and an individual from each of the counties that touched the park, including former governor Ben Hooper from Cocke County.[2] The governor named Chapman as chairman of the commission. Peay defended his appointments by arguing that the commission needed individuals familiar with land values in each county.[3]

With money in hand after the Rockefeller bequest, the two park commissions began to lay the groundwork for purchasing land. Both commissions hired crews to survey the area designated by the National Park Service. They also hired timber experts to "cruise" the tracts to estimate the value of timber on the property. This became an especially complex undertaking because the timber estimators had to take into account the cost of getting the timber out of the forest. In addition, timber estimators for the timber companies and those for the park commissions often came up with widely disparate figures for the same tract of land. Problems often arose when timber company cruisers based their estimates on timber prices in the early twenties when prices had

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[1] *Asheville Citizen*, 22 June 1927.

[2] David Chapman to Austin Peay, Peay Papers, Box 13, File 15, TSLA; and *Knoxville Journal*, 6 August 1927. Other members of the commission included E. E. Conner, a banker from Sevier County; John Clark, a Blount County banker; Nashville attorney Henry Colton; and Tiptonville businessman A.E. Markham.

[3] *Knoxville Journal*, 6 August 1927.

peaked. Park commission cruisers, on the other hand, used the currently depressed prices for timber and pulpwood. The park commissions consulted a number of experts and even traveled to Wisconsin and Pennsylvania to get the best possible information on timber prices. Appraisers then had to bring all of this information together and arrive at an estimate of the value of the property.[4]

The park commissions gathered teams of lawyers to deal with the extensive legal work required. Searching the titles and determining ownership on over 6,600 separate tracts of land proved to be a particularly difficult process, especially due to disputed titles or incomplete records on many tracts, even on land owned by timber companies. The lawyers also had to prepare condemnation cases which required the gathering of mountains of data and expert testimony for suits against the large timber and pulp companies. Indeed, condemnation hearings consumed a tremendous amount of the park commissions' time and money.[5]

Before serious negotiations with the larger companies could begin, however, the park commissions had to get the companies to cease timber operations in the park area. Arno Cammerer had assured John D. Rockefeller, Jr. that his gift would not only insure the success of the project, but would immediately stop timber cutting in the area. The Rockefeller people continually bombarded both park commissions and the National Park Service with queries as to why all timbering activities in the Smokies had not ceased.

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[4]"Data of Messrs. Rhoades and Chapman of Investigations Conducted at Rhinelander, Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, and Erie, Pennsylvania," Champion Fibre Company Papers, Box I, File 15, GSMNP Archives; and Verne Rhoades, "Report on the Activities of the North Carolina Park Commission to January 31, 1929," Governor O. Max Gardner Papers, Box 82, NCSA.

[5]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 12; and Mark Squires to Arno Cammerer, 20 November 1928, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 10, GSMNP Archives.

Although most of the timber companies stopped operations in the park area soon after the announcement of the bequest, two companies failed to stop. In July 1928 Cammerer reported to Kenneth Chorley that only one company continued to operate on the North Carolina side, the Suncrest Lumber Company, and only the Little River Lumber Company, which had retained timber rights to almost 15,000 acres of the 76,000 acres they had sold the State of Tennessee in 1927, continued to operate in Tennessee.[6] Despite the cessation of most timber cutting in the Park area, however, Rockefeller officials still expressed their concern over the activities of Suncrest and Little River.

The Suncrest Lumber Company in particular became a thorn in the flesh for both the Rockefeller people and the North Carolina Park Commission. In April 1928 Mark Squires met with A.J. Stevens, the President of the Suncrest Lumber Company, to try and get him to cease operations. Stevens refused and appealed to Kenneth Chorley and Arno Cammerer to give the company more time to fulfill existing contracts or they might be "thrown into bankruptcy."[7] Although Squires vowed to "put an end to his activities" and instituted condemnation proceedings, Suncrest responded by challenging the constitutionality of the North Carolina Park Act, thereby preventing the North Carolina Park Commission from obtaining an injunction to stop Suncrest from cutting timber in the park area.[8]

The Suncrest challenge delayed the selling of North Carolina Park bonds once again

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[6]Arno Cammerer to Kenneth Chorley, 25 July 1928, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 144, RAC.

[7]Arno Cammerer to Mark Squires, 21 April 1928, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 144, RAC.

[8]Mark Squires to Arno Cammerer, 23 April 1928 and L.R. Varser to Angus McLean, 15 November 1928, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 144, RAC.

and allowed Governor McLean to continue to drag his feet on actually transferring $2 million to the North Carolina Park Commission. As long as questions lingered over the constitutionality of the Park Act investors would refuse to buy the bonds. Indeed, Francis Christy, an attorney who investigated the continuing timber cutting in the Smokies for the Rockefeller people, advised Mr. Rockefeller not to buy the North Carolina bonds to help the project along because "it is possible that the Supreme Court of the United States might hold the North Carolina act to be unconstitutional, in which case the bonds will be void."[9]

The federal courts finally resolved the issue in January 1929. On January 14 a three-judge panel of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the park commission. However, Suncrest appealed to the Supreme Court and asked the court for a restraining order to prevent the Park Commission from interfering in their lumbering activities. On January 17 Chief Justice William Howard Taft denied Suncrest's motion. When this news became public a state district court judge issued a restraining order against Suncrest and ended the threat to the timber.[10] The *Asheville Citizen* hailed the event and commented: "For the magnificent virgin timber which is to be embraced in the park to have been slaughtered for commercial purposes would have been a crime against the future."[11]

Despite considerable pressure from the Rockefeller Foundation, Tennessee had no such success in stopping the lumbering activities of the Little River Lumber Company in

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[9]Francis Christy to Kenneth Chorley, 7 December 1928, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 144, RAC.

[10]Asheville *Citizen*, 15, 16, 18, 22 January 1929.

[11]Ibid., 15 January 1929.

the park area. When the Tennessee Park Commission tried to get a bill through the legislature allowing them to condemn its timber rights, Little River retaliated. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. began receiving letters that accused the Commission of wasting money and cheating small land owners. All of the letters also encouraged Rockefeller to withdraw his money from the Park Commission.[12]

In January 1929, the Rockefeller Foundation asked attorney Francis Christy to visit Knoxville and investigate these charges. When Christy arrived several individuals whom *Knoxville News-Sentinel* editor Edward Meeman characterized as "lumber company stooges" contacted Christy and regaled him with stories of Tennessee Park Commission waste, fraud, and overall injustice. One individual even tried to get Christy to drink whiskey with him and invited him to share dinner with him and two "luscious maidens" in an evident attempt to put Christy in a compromising position that would embarrass both the Park Commission and the Rockefeller Foundation. In a later reminiscence of these events Christy recalled that on returning to his hotel room after a visit with Meeman he almost expected "to find the Tennessee equivalent of Mata Hari under the bed." Christy reported to the Rockefeller Foundation that the charges had no basis in fact, and Rockefeller maintained his support having "no intention of being pushed around by the lumber companies."[13]

Failing to get the Rockefeller Foundation to withdraw its funds the timber interests used their political clout to get the state legislature to launch an investigation of the Tennessee Park Commission. A special investigating committee held five days of

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[12]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 29 January 1929; and Francis Christy, "The Great Smoky Mountain Park: An Episode in its Creation," April 1973, RFA, R.G. 2, Cultural Interests Series, Box 93, Folder 854, RAC.

[13]Christy, "Great Smoky Mountain Park," 2-8.

hearings in Knoxville in early March 1929. The rambling testimony of James Wright dominated the hearings. Wright condemned both the faulty legislation that had created the park commission and the activities of the park commission itself. He attacked the park commission, in particular David Chapman, for dealing with uneducated and defenseless mountain folk in a fraudulent and coercive manner. Wright later published his testimony at his own expense in a seventy-one page, hard cover book.[14] Former governor and former Park Commission member Ben Hooper also charged members of the Commission with drinking and carousing with women while on official business. While giving Wright and Hooper free rein, the chairman of the investigating committee allowed David Chapman and Arno Cammerer only a few minutes to defend themselves and the Tennessee Park Commission before the committee.[15]

Although the majority of the investigating committee found no wrong-doing on the part of the Commission, the chairman, W. B. Latham, introduced legislation to enlarge the Commssion by four, replace the chairman (Chapman) with the governor, and restrict the Park Commission's power of condemnation (House Bill No. 1202). Wright and Hooper lobbied the legislature in support of the bill. W.B. Townsend, President of the Little River Lumber Company, mailed letters to all members of the legislature, to Knoxville businessmen, and to the Knoxville newspapers reminding them that the company had monthly payrolls of from $25,000 to $30,000--most of which eventually wound up in the pockets of Knoxville merchants--which would disappear if the

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[14]Wright, *Great Smoky Mountains National Park.*

[15]Arno Cammerer to Kenneth Chorley, 4 April 1929, LSRM Collection, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 145, RAC.

Tennessee Park Commission forced them to shut down their lumbering operations.[16]

However, park supporters launched a strong counterattack. Cammerer warned the legislators that if the bill went through, he would not certify the release of Rockefeller funds to purchase park lands in Tennessee.[17] The Rockefeller Foundation also worked secretly behind the scenes and put pressure on some key legislators to keep the bill from coming to a vote.[18] In addition, park supporters held a two-and-one-half hour mass meeting in Knoxville to voice their support for Chapman and the Park Commission complete with an appearance from three Cocke County farmers dressed in overalls who testified to Chapman's and the Park Commission's fairness.[19] On April 13 the legislature adjourned without voting on the bill.[20]

With the defeat of the bill, however, the Park Commission gave up its attempt to gain condemnation power over the Little River timber. The company's political clout and the fact that the Commission's own timber cruisers discovered that the Company had "little timber of consequence left," led Chapman and the Commission to back off.[21] The Commission did, however, pursue a successful suit requiring the Little River Lumber Company to live up to its contract and quit destroying timber under ten inches in

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[16]Ibid.; and Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 73.

[17]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 7 April 1929.

[18]Christy, "Great Smoky Mountain Park," 9.

[19]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 9 April 1929.

[20]Ibid, 14 April 1929.

[21]Ibid.

diameter with their use of skidders.[22] Despite this particular success the Little River Lumber Company continued cutting timber in the park area until 1939.[23]

In the midst of these early challenges the two park commissions purchased enough land from small landowners so that by February 1930 they could turn over 150,000 acres to the Department of the Interior. This met the minimum requirement to begin Park Service administration and protection of the area, but fell far short of the 427,000 acres required for development as a full-fledged national park. On February 6 Governors Henry Horton and O. Max Gardner, all of the members of the Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission and the North Carolina Park Commission, Representative Henry Temple and Glenn Smith of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission, and Horace Kephart traveled to Washington to present the deeds to Secretary of Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur.[24] As he offered the deeds to the North Carolina land, Governor Gardner hailed this action as "the first concrete step toward the actual consummation of this project."[25] The turning over of these deeds and the beginning of administration by the National Park Service marked a significant step for the park movement, but no lands had as yet been purchased from the large timber companies--other than Little River where logging operations continued--which controlled the vast majority of land in the Smokies.

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[22]Memo from David Chapman, 10 February 1929, LRLC Papers, Box I, File 17, GSMNP Archives.

[23]Lambert, "Logging Little River," 41.

[24]*Asheville Citizen*, 5 February 1930; and *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 5 and 6 February 1930.

[25]A copy of Governor Gardner's speech at the presentation of deeds to the Secretary of Interior on February 6, 1930 found in Gardner Papers, Box 82, NCSA.

The Champion Fibre Company held the largest and most important of these properties, indeed the very heart of the park. It owned more than 92,000 acres in Tennessee and North Carolina, including such scenic areas as Mt. LeConte, Mt. Guyot, Mt. Collins, Mt. Kephart, Clingman's Dome, the Chimney Tops, Rainbow Falls, and Alum Cave. In addition, the property contained what Park Service officials reported as the "largest body of primitive hardwood timber and the heaviest stand of red spruce yet remaining in eastern America."[26]

Both park commissions knew that purchasing the Champion lands would be a difficult and complicated proposition. As early as 1925 Champion president Reuben Robertson had pointed out to North Carolina officials that in addition to the land and timber, any appraisal of the property had to include the value of railroad lines, logging camps, and saw mills. He also argued that any estimate of the property's value should include compensation for the adverse financial impact on the Champion Mill at Canton, North Carolina due to the mill's dependence "on the peculiar products of Smoky Mountain lands for their continued and successful operation."[27] Robertson particularly emphasized the value and irreplaceable nature of the red spruce on its holdings.[28] Verne Rhoades accused Champion of faking the purchase of a load of Canadian spruce at an extremely

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[26]National Park Press Release, 29 April 1931, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 146, RAC.

[27]Reuben Robertson to Mark Squires, 5 October 1925, Box 25, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[28]"Notes on Conference Between Mr. Reuben Robertson of the Champion Fibre Company and Mr. Verne Rhoades and Mr. S.F. Chapman of the Park Commission in the Forenoon of the Above Dated," 11 June 1928, North Carolina National Park, Parkway and Forest Development Commission Papers (1927-37) (hereafter NCNP,P and FDC), Box 17, NCSA.

high price in order to establish a record that could be used in any condemnation hearing to demonstrate the high cost of importing spruce pulpwood.[29]

In order to combat Champion's claims Verne Rhoades launched an extensive investigation into spruce prices and into operations similar to Champion's. He used his access to the National Park Service to obtain records of Champion's import record through the Department of Commerce and the Treasury Department. He also gained access to Forest Service and National Forest Reservation Commission records in order to determine more accurately the value of spruce and land that had recently sold similar to Champion's.[30] In September 1929 Rhoades and S.F. Chapman, also with the North Carolina Park Commission, traveled to Wisconsin and Pennsylvania to study the operations of the Rhinelander and Hammerhill Paper Companies, and even inquired into the costs of importing Russian spruce.[31]

The Tennessee Park Commission, however, made the first move in trying to obtain the almost 40,000 acres of Champion land in its state by launching condemnation proceedings in Sevier County Circuit Court on January 1, 1930.[32] Champion pulled out all stops in order to obtain a favorable appraisal from the court. They retained New

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[29]Verne Rhoades to Arno Cammerer, 21 August 1929, Box 306, File 604, RG 79, NA.

[30]Ibid.; and Verne Rhoades to Arno Cammerer, 26 April 1930, Box 306, File 604, RG 79, NA.

[31]"Data of Messrs. Rhoades and Chapman of Investigations conducted at Rhinelander, Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, and Erie Pennsylvania," 21 September 1929, Champion Papers, Box I, File 15, GSMNP Archives.

[32]George Smathers to Felix Alley, 1 July 1930, Champion Papers, Box III, File 11, GSMNP Archives; and Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 82.

York attorney John W. Davis, a trustee for the Rockefeller Foundation, as special counsel for this case.[33] They had earlier hired Charles Evans Hughes but lost his services when President Hoover appointed him Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.[34] The company also spread flyers around Sevier County entitled, "The Champion Fibre Company a Good Taxpayer," signed "Tax Payer." The flyer pointed out that Champion had paid $26,688.75 in taxes to Sevier County in the past three years, an amount that the county would lose if Champion sold its lands to the Tennessee Park Commission. The flyer continued by arguing that "the propaganda that the people will be repaid by tourist travel is empty twaddle," and concluded by claiming: "Some Park officials are treating property holders in Sevier in a manner that suggests tyranny instead of allowing the Great State of Tennessee to continue as the Protector of its citizens and their property. Tennessee is a Grand Old Commonwealth, when let alone, when its powers are exercised by reasonable and patriotic men."[35]

The case finally came before a five-man jury of view in November 1930. Champion selected two jurors, the Tennessee Park Commission chose two, and the four jurors together selected the fifth member. The jury spent more than two months going over the property and listening to expert testimony presented by both sides. Champion valued its property, and the incidental damages that would accrue from the loss of its property, at over $6 million. The Park Commission estimated the value of the property at less than

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[33]Kenneth Chorley to A.W., 30 October 1929, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 146, RAC.

[34]David Chapman to Reuben Robertson, 29 January 1931, Gardner Papers, Box 82, NCSA.

[35]"The Champion Fibre Company a Good Taxpayer," Box 309, File 610, RG 79, NA.

$500,000. They argued that Champion had purchased the property for $643,000 at a time when prices peaked due to the high demand for timber during World War I. In addition, Commission lawyers pointed out that Sevier County assessed the property at only $323,000 for tax purposes.[36]

On January 15, 1931 the jury issued a majority report awarding Champion $2,325,000 for its land plus $225,000 for incidental damages to its plant in Canton. David Chapman asserted that if the courts upheld this decision it would mean the death of the Park, and that at the rate awarded to Champion--approximately $65 an acre--it would take $27 million to buy the necessary land. Chapman also argued that the Tennessee Park Commission had paid, on the average, only $15 an acre for land already purchased. Champion attorney J.H. Frantz barely concealed his glee at the verdict and taunted Chapman and others who criticized the award: "We had hoped for a little more, but since the report was made by five high class men of Sevier County who spent three months going over the property and studying evidence, we feel that it would not be good taste to criticize them."[37]

Park supporters immediately accused Champion of exercising undue influence on the jury. Arno Cammerer wrote Park Service Director Horace Albright that the jury had lacked supervision with no judge present for the presentation of testimony, that Champion representatives had taken members of the jury to "places for entertainment purposes," and that members of the jury "could read the papers and be accessible to

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[36]Arno Cammerer to Horace Albright, 10 January 1931, Box 309, File 610, RG 79, NA; *Asheville Citizen*, 16 January 1931; and *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 16 January 1931.

[37]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 16 January 1931; and *Asheville Citizen*, 16 January 1931.

anyone who wanted to approach them."[38] Four years later park supporters discovered how badly Champion wanted a favorable settlement in the case when the federal government indicted Sevier County attorney Clyde Bogart for tax evasion. Part of the income that Bogart failed to report included a $15,000 check from the Champion Fibre Company, dated during the time the Tennessee Park Commission had hired Bogart as a local legal expert to aid in jury selection and other matters related to the Sevier County case.[39]

The Sevier County verdict put the Tennessee Park Commission and all park supporters into a deep quandary. They could take a "non-suit" and start over with a new jury of five, appeal to a higher court with a judge and a jury of twelve, or look for some alternative.[40] Pressure to make a quick decision became intense when Champion announced its intention to resume timber operations on its property "as soon as may be practicable." Champion President Reuben Robertson accused the State of Tennessee of taking "undue advantage of its position as a sovereign" and argued that the value of the Champion lands--"the heart of the Park, the real Park lands"--could not be compared to the value of the "fringe lands" and the cut-over lands already purchased. Robertson defended his intention to resume timber operations by arguing that the park commissions did not have enough money to buy the necessary land and "that the establishment of the Park by you [David Chapman] is a hopeless proposition."

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[38]Arno Cammerer, "Confidential Report for the Director," 22 January 1931, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 146, RAC.

[39]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 2 May 1935; and David Chapman to Arno Cammerer, 3 July 1935, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 17, GSMNP Archives.

[40]Cammerer, "Confidential Report for the Director."

Robertson put even more pressure on the park commissions by releasing this information to the press and having John Davis forward a copy to the Rockefeller Foundation.[41]

Despite David Chapman's opinion that the situation would "develop into a sort of endurance contest," and that park forces would eventually win, officials of the National Park Service and the Rockefeller Foundation began pushing for some sort of negotiated settlement.[42] John Davis and Reuben Robertson met with Park Service Director Horace Albright in February and urged him to act as an abitrator between Champion and the two park commissions.[43] Albright asked both commisions to appoint representatives with the power to act on the matter to meet with him and the Champion people in Washington on April 27.[44]

Negotiations began on the appointed day with David Chapman leading the Tennessee delegation and E.C. Brooks serving as chief spokesman for the North Carolina Park Commission, due to the illness of Mark Squires. Reuben Robertson represented Champion's interest, and Horace Albright and Arno Cammerer mediated the negotiations. After three days of intense discussions, which on several occasions seemed to reach an

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[41]Reuben Robertson to David Chapman, 21 January 1931; and John Davis to Arthur Woods, 27 January 1931, both found in LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 146, RAC.

[42]David Chapman to Horace Albright, 30 January 1931, Box 309, File 610, RG 79, NA; and Kenneth Chorley, "Memo for New York Files - Re. Great Smoky Mts.," LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 146, RAC.

[43]Reuben Robertson to Horace Albright, 13 April 1931, Box 309, File 610, RG 79, NA.

[44]Horace Albright to Reuben Robertson, 14 April 1931, Box 309, File 610, RG 79, NA.

impasse, the parties agreed on a purchase price for the entire 92,814 acres in both Tennessee and North Carolina for $3 million. Ironically, the selling price fell $250,000 short of an offer made by the park commissions two years earlier which Champion rejected. Albright attributed the agreement to Champion's desire to avoid additional, expensive litigation, the agreement that they would receive the money within ten days, and the desire of the North Carolina and Tennessee Park Commissions to move the project along and bring some hope to their regions, hard hit by local bank failures.[45] Robertson especially complimented Albright and Cammerer for the "wonderfully patient, tactful, and fairminded manner in which they conducted the negotiations."[46]

Celebrations ensued in both Asheville and Knoxville, as park boosters once again assured supporters that "the park is formally and irrevocably established."[47] An editorial in the *Asheville Citizen* hailed the event as a great day for Asheville and its future:

> The tide has now turned for Asheville and for Western North Carolina. The outlook for this city and section is steadily brightening. The winter of our discontent is over. The clouds that loured over us are lifting. We can say at last in all sincerity that there is no city whose prospects for the future are richer with hope than those which now stretch out before the people of Asheville.[48]

An editorial in the *Knoxville News-Sentinel* expressed similar sentiments when it asserted that with the announcement of the Champion settlement "bright sunshine broke

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[45]Horace Albright to Kenneth Chorley, 30 April 1931, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 146, RAC.

[46]Reuben Robertson to Horace Albright, 7 May 1931, Box 309, File 610, RG 79, NA.

[47]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 29 April 1931.

[48]*Asheville Citizen*, 30 April 1931.

thru the clouds of depression which have hung over Knoxville and East Tennessee."[49] The Knoxville High School band and a crowd of over five hundred greeted Chapman and Ben Morton when they returned from Washington.[50] On May 1 the *News-Sentinel* printed a poem hailing Chapman as a "fearless champion":

> To bring to man, what God to Man had given . . .
> Reached is the goal, for which so long he has striven,
> Finished the course, which he so bravely chose. --
> LeConte smiles gently from his throne of rocks:
> "Salute your Colonel Chapman, Father Knox!"

An editorial also called for the naming of an unnamed peak in the Smokies after Chapman.[51]

Although Robertson repeatedly contended that Champion had accepted a price "which stops far short of compensation" and had earlier intimated that if Champion lost its spruce reserves it would transfer its operations to another location, Champion gained a great deal from the transaction as well. The large cash infusion in a cash short period enabled Champion to launch a major expansion of the Canton plant on May 3. The company ordered over $100,000 worth of new machinery to begin the manufacture of chlorine and caustic soda and rework the plant so that it could utilize timber other than spruce and hemlock in the paper making process. Indeed, Champion operated throughout the Depression era at full employment. The settlement also helped Champion in the public relations department as the *Citizen* argued that, in Champion, "There could not be

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[49]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 29 April 1931.

[50]Ibid., 30 April 1931.

[51]Ibid., 1 May 1931.

a finer example of the subordination of personal interests to the general interests."[52]

The North Carolina Park Commission reached a settlement with the Suncrest Lumber Company for its 33,000 acres in much the same way as the Champion case. The two sides' valuation of the property differed widely, with the Park Commission valuing the property at $400,000 and Suncrest valuing it at $3,800,000. In 1931 three court appointed commissioners appraised the property at $522,255.33, but Suncrest appealed the decision.[53] In September 1932 a special jury valued the property at $600,000, and Suncrest and the North Carolina Park Commission agreed on this as the purchase price. However, the Park Commission had to settle for half-interest in the property as it only had $300,000 on hand.[54] It finally paid off the remaining $300,000 in May 1934.[55]

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[52]*Asheville Citizen*, 3 May 1931.

[53]Verne Rhoades, "Report of Executive Secretary," 1 October 1931, Brooks Collection, NCPC Papers, Box IX, File D, DUSC.

[54]*Asheville Citizen*, 25 and 29 September, and 1 October 1932.

[55]Ibid., 1 May 1934.

CHAPTER 10

DEPRESSION, POLITICAL TURMOIL, FEDERAL INTERVENTION, AND FINAL VICTORY

Despite the euphoria of the Champion purchase, the turning over of 138,000 additional acres to the Park Service in November 1931, and the purchase of the Suncrest property, the movement toward the establishment of a national park virtually ground to a halt over the next year due to financial difficulties. The Great Depression and resultant bank failures in Asheville and Knoxville seriously cut into the finances available to the two park commissions. Once again these commissions had to seek new sources of funding in order to keep the project alive.

One problem resulted from the inability of many of the Park Fund subscribers to pay off their pledges. Verne Rhoades assessed the situation in Asheville for Arno Cammerer in 1931: "I can say frankly that so many people are out of work and out of funds, with their business on the ragged edge, that I believe it to be absolutely impossible to collect very much from private sources, even when subscriptions were made in the best of faith. The people simply do not have the money, and hundreds and hundreds of taxpayers have lost their property since the bank failure in November, 1930."[1] David Chapman echoed Rhoades in his description of the problems in Knoxville: "Conditions have been growing worse here for many, many months and each month seeing some of our

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[1]Verne Rhoades to Arno Cammerer, 30 September 1931, NCNP,P and FDC Papers (1927-37), Box 16, NCSA.

subscribers wholly unable to pay, who, always heretofore have been good."[2] Under pressure from the Park Service and the Rockefeller Foundation to come up with more money, both park commissions filed suits to attempt to collect the pledges. However, the negative public perception and the expense of the project made it a short-lived attempt.[3] Indeed, of the almost $1million pledged the park commissions collected only a little over $420,000.[4]

In addition to the inability of the park commissions to collect pledges, bank failures tied up funds for the purchase of park lands in both states. In Tennessee, the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association had $48,000 in the failed East Tennessee Bank.[5] The North Carolina Park Commission had over $132,000 tied up in failed banks. Although all of these funds were insured, it took several years of litigation against the insurance companies--another unexpected expense for the park commissions--to gain reimbursement.[6] Arno Cammerer expressed his consternation over the situation in a letter to Kenneth Chorley: "I am fast losing all the black hair on my head helping out

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[2]David Chapman to Arno Cammerer, 26 September 1933, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 15, GSMNP Archives.

[3]Rhoades to Cammerer, 30 September 1931.

[4]Harold Ickes to Kenneth McKellar, 28 September 1940, Box 1078, File 101, RG 79, NA.

[5]Chapman to Cammerer, 26 September 1933.

[6] "North Carolina Park Commission: Report on Audit, October 31, 1925 to June 30, 1933," Governor J.C.B. Ehringhaus Papers, Box 160, NCSA.

these various park commissions in the east."[7]

For Cammerer and for the two park commissions the situation grew dramatically worse in 1932 and 1933. During this period the appointments for members of both park commissions expired. Despite the time and effort donated, their relative success under difficult circumstances, and several audits that had revealed no misappropriation of funds, the commissions fell victim to political turmoil in both states. In Tennessee, the park commission got caught in the midst of the crumbling of Luke Lea's political machine and Henry Horton's administration and the takeover of state politics by the E.H. Crump machine in 1932.[8] In North Carolina, the park commission found itself replaced by individuals loyal to the Shelby machine that had gained control of the state Democratic party in 1930 with the defeat of Senator Furnifold Simmons.[9]

The appointments of the members of the Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission expired in August 1932. Governor Horton, despite pressure from Arno Cammerer and a delegation of Knoxvillians who visited the governor and urged him not to change the composition of the commission, appointed five of his cronies, headed by his Knox County campaign manager George Dempster, to the commission. Horton retained only two members of the old commission, David Chapman and John Clark. A variety of accusations flew around the appointments. Some argued that Horton's appointment

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[7]Arno Cammerer to Kenneth Chorley, 3 October 1931, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 147, RAC. For information on Depression conditions, particularly bank closings, in Asheville and Knoxville see: Milton Ready, *Asheville: Land of the Sky* (Northridge, CA: Windsor Publications, 1986) 85-91; and Michael J. McDonald and William Bruce Wheeler, *Knoxville, Tennessee: Continuity and Change in an Appalachian City* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983) 62-63.

[8]Lee, *Tennessee in Turmoil*, 76-149; and Key, *Southern Politics*, 58-81.

[9]Key, *Southern Politics*, 205-215.

reflected Luke Lea's desire to gain control of park commission funds to bolster his failing banking empire. Others argued that Jim Wright and other landowners in the Elkmont area had engineered the change in order to get higher prices for their property.[10]

The situation became even worse when the new commission failed to re-elect Chapman as chairman. The commission elected former Knoxville mayor James Trent as temporary chairman and in November selected George Dempster as permanent chair.[11] The activities of the new park Commission became chaotic at best over the next six months, with the new majority firing several longtime employees, including land buyer W.R. Mize, secretary-treasurer Frederick Ault, and office manager Marguerite Preston. Supporters of Chapman and members of the new commission exchanged barbs regularly in the newspapers, with both sides accusing the other of various malfaesances.[12]

The culmination of events came in January 1933, when a confrontation between Chapman and new commission chairman George Dempster erupted into a brawl at a commission meeting. Reportedly Chapman circulated a statement contending that the new commission had spent over $11,000 in the previous four months and had only acquired one-fourth of an acre. When Dempster called Chapman a "goddamned liar," Chapman hit him and the brawl ensued. Chapman received the brunt of the damage and ended up with a

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[10]David Chapman to John Clark, 22 September 1932, Box 313, File 870.1, RG 79, NA; and *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 29 August 1932.

[11]A.E. Demaray to Frank Bond, undated, Box 312, File 731-01, RG 79, NA.

[12]Arno Cammerer to Kenneth Chorley, 17 January 1933, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 148, RAC contains a brief summary of the chaotic conditions within the Tennessee Park Commission from August 1932 to January 1933. The events were also thoroughly covered in the *Knoxville News-Sentinel* during this period.

missing front tooth, a black eye, a cut lip, and two broken ribs.[13]

As a result of the fight and the overall public embarrassment of the conduct of the new commission, new governor Hill McAlister received a great deal of pressure to add four new members to the commission or eliminate it altogether and give its duties to some other agency. Knox County McAlister supporters Thurman Ailor and Harold Wimberly checked out the sentiments of East Tennesseans toward the Horton appointed commission for the governor. Wimberly urged McAlister to abolish the commission altogether.[14] Ailor agreed and asserted that even though many people in the area still supported David Chapman, many Knoxvilians believed "that to a large extent he has lost his grip on public confidence." Ailor continued that the situation provided an ideal opportunity to put the park project wholely in the hands of McAlister's supporters in that "in order to get rid of the others, he [David Chapman] can also be very handily dispensed with."[15]

Despite letters of support from Horace Albright and declarations of public support from East Tennesseans, McAlister did not name Chapman as a member of the State Park and Forestry Commission, which took over the duties of the Tennessee Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission through legislative action on April 7, 1933.[16] The

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[13]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 10 January 1933.

[14]Harold Wimberly to Hill McAlister, 8 February 1933, Governor Hill McAlister Papers, Box 74, File 15, TSLA.

[15]Thurman Ailor to Hill McAlister, 8 February 1933, McAlister Papers, Box 74, File 15, TSLA.

[16]Horace Albright to Hill McAlister, 10 April 1933, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 2, GSMNP Archives; Steve Whaley to Hill McAlister, 20 April 1933, McAlister Papers, Box 74, File 15, TSLA; and *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 6, 7, 8, and 11 April 1933.

members of the State Park and Forestry Commission--George Berry, Charles Cullom, and Frank Rice--all had the recommendation of Senator Kenneth McKellar and others associated with the Crump political machine.[17] McAlister named 28-year-old Knoxville attorney Harold Wimberly, McAlister's Knox County Campaign Manager, as executive secretary with chief responsibility for day-to-day opearations of the commission. None of these individuals had any previous involvement with the park movement.[18]

The decision came as quite a blow to Chapman, who had stood in the forefront of the East Tennessee park movement for almost ten years. The decision to oust Chapman proved particularly ironic given the public acclaim Chapman had received on the heels of the Champion purchase. Indeed, Knoxvillians had even gotten the Tennessee Nomenclature Commission to name a peak in the Smokies after Chapman.[19] Despite McAlister's action Chapman remained intimately involved, however, in the completion of the Park. In 1934 McAlister named Chapman as an "honorary member" of the State Park Commission, and both Wimberly and officials of the National Park Service frequently sought his advice.[20] In addition, Chapman still retained his leadership of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, which held over $40,000 for the

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[17]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 11 April 1933; and Hill McAlister to Kenneth McKellar, 12 September 1933, McAlister Papers, Box 78, File 5, TSLA.

[18]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 8 April 1933.

[19]Robert Lindsay Mason to Horace Albright, 18 May 1931, Box 312, File 731-01, RG 79, NA.

[20]Hill McAlister to Kenneth McKellar, 12 September 1934, McAlister Papers, Box 78, File 5, TSLA; and David Chapman to Arno Cammerer, 19 May 1933, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 15, GSMNP Archives.

purchase of Park lands.[21]

Although not quite as dramatic, the North Carolina Park Commission suffered a similar fate in July 1933, when Governor J.C.B. Ehringhaus replaced the eleven-member commission with a new five-member commission.[22] The old park commission had been attacked in the state legislature for paying excessive attorney fees and general mismanagement of funds. In many ways the Commission had set itself up for such accusations by hiring Commission chairman Mark Squires as "special counsel"--Squires received $21,400 for his services between October 1928 and June 1933.[23] Although audits and investigations never revealed any malfeasance of any kind on the Commission, individuals connected with the Shelby political machine--now in control of the North Carolina Democratic Party--used the employment of Squires as an excuse to replace the old Commission who had received their appointments when the Furnifold Simmons machine ran the state.[24]

As in the Tennessee case, membership on the North Carolina Park Commission had much more to do with political loyalties than with involvement with the park project. An editorial in the *Asheville Citizen* lamented the fact that only one of the new commission members resided in the park area and only two had donated to the park fund-raising campaign. The editorial continued in wonderment: "It seems strange,

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[21]Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, 27 September 1933, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 15, GSMNP Archives.

[22]*Asheville Citizen*, 19 July 1933.

[23]"NCPC: Report on Audit, October 31, 1925 to June 30, 1933."

[24]*Asheville Citizen*, 19 July 1933.

nevertheless, that with so many men in North Carolina who have worked for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park for years, with so many men who have given liberally of their time and money to bring the park into being, the Governor should have passed over them in making these appointments."[25]

The replacement of the North Carolina Park Commission seemed especially pointless as the old commission had already purchased most of the land on the North Carolina side of the park and the new commission had little left to do. Mark Squires tried to put the situation in perspective as he became a "private citizen" once more: "Appointed as we were, to please a thought deemed fanaticism and folly we have brought the movement to a position our successors will have nothing to do. The hard work has been accomplished, the obstacles overcome and those now our detractors have done nothing to speed us on our way."[26] E.C. Brooks consoled Squires: "I recall that Moses was permitted to stand on a high elevation and see the Promised Land, but another was permitted to lead the people. But as I have studied history somewhat, I am led to believe that Moses still has more credit than Joshua."[27]

Despite the economic hardship caused by the Depression and the confusion and delays caused by the political battles over the park commissions, the park movement rapidly recovered in late July 1933, when Franklin Roosevelt took an interest in the completion

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[25]*Asheville Citizen*, 19 July 1933. The new members of the North Carolina Park Commission were Will W. Neal, chairman; C.A. Cannon; Thomas Raoul; John Aiken; and Foster Hankins.

[26]Mark Squires to E.C. Brooks, 10 August 1933, Brooks Collection, NCPC Papers, Box IX, File D, DUSC.

[27]E. C. Brooks to Mark Squires, 15 September 1933, Brooks Collection, NCPC Papers, Box IX, File D, DUSC.

of the project. F.D.R.'s interest in the Smokies came out of his interest in conservation and his desire to create employment opportunities for Civilian Conservation Corps workers.[28] Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes also held a strong interest in the park project and brought the Smokies situation to F.D.R.'s attention. Ickes encouraged Roosevelt to issue an executive order allocating $1,550,000, the amount estimated by North Carolina and Tennessee officials necessary to complete land purchases in the Park. Ickes argued that this action "would greatly enhance the effectiveness of and enlarge the opportunity for employment of men under the provisions of the Emergency Conservation Act of March 31, 1933, and would in addition contribute in a large and desirable way toward the fruition of the public objectives and program for the establishment of this national park."[29] President Roosevelt initially issued an executive order on July 28, 1933 (No. 6237), but because of the wording of the Act of Congress of May 22, 1926 (44 Stat. 616), which forbade the federal government from purchasing land for the park, had to rescind the order and revise it so that land purchased with these monies would not be credited to the states, but would be added later to the park through congressional enactment. The President issued the revised order on December 28, 1933 (No. 6542).[30]

In addition to the $1,50,000 from the federal government, Arno Cammerer received permission from the Rockefeller Foundation to release, unmatched, the final $500,000

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[28]For information on Franklin D. Roosevelt and his interest in conservation projects see: Fox, *John Muir*, 183-217; and Edgar B. Nixon, ed., *Franklin D. Roosevelt and Conservation, 1911-1945* (Hyde Park, NY: Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, 1957)

[29]Harold Ickes to Franklin Roosevelt, 28 July 1933, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 148, RAC.

[30]*Asheville Citizen*, 4 January 1934.

in the $5 million Rockefeller Fund.[31] Rockefeller agreed on the condition that Congress reduce the minimum acreage necessary to establish the park officially so that the $5 million would have still provided half of the necessary land to establish the park.[32] In June 1934 Congress passed the appropriate legislation to satisfy the Rockefellers providing that an area of 400,000 acres "within the minmum boundaries of the park shall be established as a completed park for administration, protection and maintenance."[33] Ironically, June 15, 1934, the date of the passage of this bill--which received no mention in either the Knoxville or Asheville newspapers--has become recognized as the official birthdate of the Park.[34]

The intervention of the federal government in the park project accomplished several important things. First, it brought desperately needed funds to the project to move it finally toward completion. Second, it took the completion of the park out of the hands of the state commissions and placed it into the hands of federal officials. From 1934 to the dedication of the park in 1940, the project that had been so dominated by local action would increasingly come under federal control.

Even as the federal government began its intervention, however, the North Carolina

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[31]Max Mason to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 19 January 1934, RFA, Cultural Interests Series, Box 93, Folder 855, RAC.

[32]Memorandum, Arno Cammerer to Harold Ickes, 17 April 1937, Box 3816, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

[33]"Acts of Congress Relating to GSMNP." Despite this change, the National Park Service maintained the requirement that Tennessee and North Carolina turn over 427,000 acres before development would begin--note the act mentions "administration, protection and maintenance" but not "development."

[34]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 138.

Park Commission completed its final major land purchase: the 33,000 acres belonging to the Ravensford Lumber Company. The purchase of this property followed an all-too-familiar pattern. The North Carolina Park Commission appraised the property at between $500,000 and $600,000, while Ravensford set its value at between $4 and $5 million. In August 1933, after a fifteen-day hearing, three court-appointed commissioners established the value of the property at $975,000.[35] The state appealed the case to Superior Court, which to their consternation set the price at $1,107,190. This price included $50,000 for railroad property that had never previously been discussed.[36] After several months of wrangling, in which Ravensford demanded an additional $63,000 for taxes, insurance, and maintenance paid out after the North Carolina Park Commission forced them to cease operations in 1929, the parties finally settled on the $1,107,190 price in April 1934 after an estimated expenditure in legal fees by both sides of over $100,000.[37] On May 1, Assistant Park Service Director George Moskey took almost $1.5 million to Asheville to make the final payment to the Suncrest Lumber Company and to pay all of the Ravensford judgement. At this point North Carolina had purchased all of the property needed for the park in that state and Arno Cammerer predicted that the formal opening of the park would come by the summer of 1935.[38]

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[35]*Asheville Citizen*, 15 November 1933; and A. Hall Johnston to J.C.B. Ehringhaus, 23 August 1933, Ehringhaus Papers, Box 160, NCSA.

[36]Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, 14 December 1933, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 15, GSMNP Archives.

[37]*Asheville Citizen*, 13 January 1934.

[38]Ibid., 29 April, 1 May, and 16 June 1934.

The focus of park supporters now moved to Tennessee and the last major land purchase, the property of the Morton Butler Lumber Company. Negotiations with the Morton Butler family had been ongoing since at least 1926, when Stephen Mather urged Morton Butler not to sell or develop his land in Blount County. As in most cases, however, the Tennessee Park Commission's valuation of the 26,000 acres of virgin timber differred a great deal from that of the Morton Butler Company. In addition to compensation for timber on the property, the Butlers also wanted a cash settlement for the potential value of water power development on Abram's Creek which ran through the property.[39]

Negotiations dragged on for years with neither side willing to give ground on its estimations of the value of the property. In 1928 Morton Butler died, but his sons and their lawyers kept up negotiations. By 1932 the National Park Service became so frustrated with the pace of negotiations that it briefly considered the possibility of leaving the property out of the park boundary. However, this idea soon fell by the wayside, inasmuch as the Morton Butler property overlooked Cades Cove, an area designated as a principal development site by the Park Service. Both Arno Cammerer and Park Superintendent Ross Eakin argued against its elimination from the park as either timber or tourist development overlooking Cades Cove would ruin this prime area.[40]

In 1935 the issue finally went to court. As the Park Service had taken over land purchasing for the park at this juncture, the decision was made to begin proceedings in

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[39]Report on Morton Butler Timber Company negotiations sent from Edward Ryerson to Kenneth Chorley, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 146, RAC.

[40]Arno Cammerer to Ross Eakin, 20 May 1932; and Ross Eakin to Arno Cammerer, 23 May 1932, Box 305, File 602, RG 79, NA.

federal court. James Cooper, a former Tennessee assistant attorney general who had handled a number of condemnation hearings for the Tennessee Park Commission but who now worked for the Justice Department, presented the government's case. Government witnesses, including David Chapman, set the value of the Morton Butler land at $400,000. Witnesses for Morton Butler set the land's value at $1.5 million, although Blount County only valued it at $149,416 for tax purposes in 1934.[41] After proceedings that lasted over a month, the five-man jury set the property's value at $800,000. Cooper argued that the decision was way out of line with current land and timber values and recommended against purchase at that price even if the Park Service had to leave the property out of the park.[42]

The government appealed the case, despite Cooper's fears that the outcome might cost the government even more money, as had happened in several North Carolina cases. Prior to the start of the case he wrote to Governor Hill McAllister: "All I can do is to do my best to prepare it for trial and try it as best I can, and trust to the integrity of the citizenship of the country to protect the Government, which in ordinary times is a forlorn hope."[43] Cooper put on quite a show for the jury of twelve, lining up dollar bills along the rail of the jury box and explaining the "enormity" of Morton Butler's claim of $1,400,000, an amount if lined up end-to-end would stretch for 125 miles, from Maryville to 17 miles beyond Chattanooga. To Cooper's pleasant surprise the jury

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[41]Harold Ickes to Hill McAllister, 29 June 1935, McAllister Papers, Box 66, File 7, TSLA.

[42]*Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 5 May 1935.

[43]J.W. Cooper to Hill McAlister, 17 July 1935, McAlister Papers, Box 66, File 7, TSLA.

reduced the previous award by over $300,000, setting the price of the property at $483,500.[44]

Despite final success in purchasing the Morton Butler tract, the park movement once again saw a shortage of funds bring the process to a grinding halt. The two park commissions had estimated that it would take a little over $2 million to complete land purchases in 1933. However, higher than estimated jury awards, especially in North Carolina, and large attorney fees left almost $750,000 worth of land unpurchased in Tennessee.[45] Pressure increased on the Park Service to decrease the minimum amount of land needed before development work would begin, so that the park could be officially opened. Cammerer resisted these efforts because he believed that if development began, then Tennessee would lose all incentive to complete the necessary land purchases leaving large inholdings in the park. Experience in other parks had taught Cammerer that if inholdings went unpurchased, once development began owners would dramatically increase their asking price for these properties making it increasingly difficult to buy them. In addition, he feared that these inholdings would "be used for all sorts of purposes adverse to our park administration."[46] The major problem remained, however, in that neither Tennessee, nor the Park Service possessed the funds necessary to purchase these lands.

At this point Tennessee realized one of the benefits of having its senior United States

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[44]*Knoxville Journal*, 7 August 1935.

[45]Memorandum, Arno Cammerer to Harold Ickes, 24 March 1936, Land Acquistion Papers, Box XV, File 6, GSMNP Archives.

[46]Memorandum, Arno Cammerer to Harold Ickes, 17 April 1937, Box 3816, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

Senator Kenneth McKellar on the Appropriations Committee. McKellar added amendments to a bill for the purchase of lands in the Tahoe National Forest authorizing the appropriation of $743,265.29 to complete the acquisition of land for the park (75th Congress, S. 2583). The bill passed the Senate in August 1937, passed the House in February 1938, and President Roosevelt signed it on February 14, 1938 (52 Stat. 28).[47]

With this money in hand the Park Service could now complete the purchase of land within the minimum boundary so that development of the park could begin. Although the park commissions and the Park Service had purchased all of the necessary large tracts, the new funding allowed the Park Service to file condemnation suits against several individuals who had held out for higher prices. It took more than two additional years to clear up these cases, but finally the Park Service held the official dedication of the park on September 2, 1940 with President Roosevelt providing the keynote address. Soon after the dedication the Park Service added two additional large tracts, one through a friendly condemnation suit against the Aluminum Corporation of America for 16,288 acres in Tennessee in November 1940, and the second through a deal made with the Tennessee Valley Authority for 45,920 acres in North Carolina between Fontana Lake and the park boundary in 1943.

The purchase of park land succeeded in spite of powerful opposition, endless litigation, bank failures, inability to collect pledges, and delays caused by political wrangling. The increased presence of the federal government through F.D.R.'s executive order and the Congressional appropriation engineered by Senator Kenneth McKellar played a significant role in this success. However, the everyday efforts of private

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[47]Ibid; *Asheville Citizen*, 3 and 15 February 1938; and "Acts of Congress Relating to GSMNP."

citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians, the combination of public and private interests, once again kept the movement going through trying times, and after seventeen years brought the project to successful completion.

CHAPTER 11

THE BARBARISM OF THE HUNS

The most controversial aspect of buying land for the park involved the purchase of land owned by individuals and the eventual removal of those people from inside the boundaries of the park. In the early days of the movement boosters had downplayed the existence of people living within the proposed park boundary. An early publication of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association pointed out that despite the wilderness character of the Smokies, "human beings exist there, although their numbers are not great and they are very much scattered in the proposed Park area."[1] Most publications talked about the quaint ways of the mountaineers--or as they liked to call them "our contemporary ancestors"--their isolated lifestyle locked in the eighteenth century, and their speech which still reflected the English of Shakespeare's day. Boosters never mentioned the possibility that the people living in the park area might have to move, and argued: "As inhabitants of the Park, these picturesque southern highlanders will be an asset, and so will their ancient log cabins, their foot-logs bridging streams, and their astonishing, huge water wheels."[2]

These early accounts fictionalized the life of residents of the Smoky Mountains on a number of counts. First, although boosters spoke of the region as virtually vacant, the area inside the proposed park boundary contained an estimated 1200 farms, 5000 lots

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[1]Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, "Great Smoky Mountains," copy in GSMCA Papers, Box XII, File 32, GSMNP Archives.

[2]Ibid.

and summer homes, and over 4000 people.[3] Many of these individuals lived in organized communities and townships. Cades Cove had approximately 600 residents in 1928, a school census in the mid 1920s counted 409 individuals in the Greenbriar community between the ages of six and twenty-one, and the 1920 federal census listed 921 residents of Cataloochee township. Other significant concentrations of population in the Smokies included Sugarlands, Fightin' Creek, Webbs Creek, Copeland, the logging communites of Tremont, Smokemont, and Elkmont, along with the almost fifty vacation cottages, with lodge and recreation facilities, of the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs near Elkmont. These communities contained churches, general merchandise stores, schools, and post offices.[4]

The "contemporary ancestor" notion further mythologized the lives of these people. Park boosters often based their views on contemporary popular images of the southern Appalachian people which depicted them as "the exponents of a retarded civilization, who show the degenerate symptoms of an arrested development."[5] The portrait of southern Appalachian life presented by Horace Kephart in *Our Southern Highlanders* played an

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[3]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 12; and Brown, "Power, Privilege, and Tourism," 40.

[4]Estimates for Cades Cove come from, Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 251; for Greenbriar see, Jerry Wear, Mary Alice Teague, and Lynn Alexander, *Lost Communities of Sevier County, Tennessee: Greenbriar* (Sevierville: Sevier County Heritage Committee, 1985), 41; for Cataloochee see, Givens, "Cataloochee and the Establishment of the GSMNP," 59; for information on the logging communities of the Smokies see Vic Weals, *Last Train to Elkmont: A Look Back at Life on Little River in the Great Smoky Mountains* (Knoxville: Olden Press, 1993); and Florence Cope Bush, *Dorie: Woman of the Mountains* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992); for the vacation cabins at Elkmont see, Morrell, "A Brief History of the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs."

[5]Ellen Semple Churchill, "The Anglo-Saxons of the Kentucky Mountains: A Study in Anthrogeography," *Geographical Journal*, 17 (1901): 592.

especially powerful role in forming the image of the mountain people among his fellow park boosters. Kephart saw the park bringing tremendous benefits to a mountain people, who had previously been subject "to a law of nature that dooms an isolated and impoverished people to deterioration." With the coming of the park "the highlander, at last, is to be caught up in the current of human progress."[6]

Recent research has revealed that these accounts dramatically overstated both the isolation and the static nature of Appalachian life and culture. In the early part of the twentieth century the people of the southern Appalachian region struggled to adapt to new conditions that produced an increasingly harsh and difficult economic environment. As Durwood Dunn observed, in coping with changing times the people of Cades Cove represented "the broad mainstream of nineteenth- and twentieth-century American culture from whence they came," not some vestigal community locked in the eighteenth century.[7] Dunn, Crandall Shifflet, and Florence Bush Cope, effectively demonstrate that the people of the Smokies had a great deal of contact with the outside world, moved often in search of work, and possessed significant knowledge of life, culture, and progress in the larger world.[8]

The notion that the people of the Smokies would remain as "inhabitants of the Park," despite arguments to the contrary by politicians and park boosters, quickly became exposed as a fiction as well. By 1926, with the passage of the park bill in the United

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[6]Kephart, *Our Southern Highlanders*, 445, 450-51.

[7]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 256.

[8]Ibid; and Crandall Shifflet, *Coaltowns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991); and Bush, *Dorie*.

States Congress and talk of passing laws to allow state park commissions to condemn property for park purposes, rumors began to spread that people living in the Smokies would be forced from their homes. Governor Austin Peay responded to these rumors at a mass meeting at Elkmont in 1926: "As long as I am a member of the Park Commission, I wish to assure these people that there will be no condemnation of their homes." Such an action, he argued, "for the pleasure and profit of the rest of the state would be a blot upon the state that the barbarism of the Huns could not match!"[9]

Despite these assurances the issue would not go away, especially by 1927 when the park commissions began to buy small tracts of land and opponents of the park, especially in Tennessee, began to use the issue of the removal of the mountain people against park boosters. David Chapman expressed his concern for the problem when he wrote to Glenn Smith that "a great deal of false propaganda has been spread along the border, with the result that quite a bit of feeling has been aroused in some places." Chapman saw the situation as one "which must be handled with great care."[10] In the summer of 1927 the park commissions and the National Park Service began to work on some sort of plan to buy the land but then grant leases to land owners allowing them to stay for a short time until they could relocate.[11] In February 1928, President Coolidge signed a bill (45 Stat. 109) that authorized the leasing of park lands to prior occupants for a period of

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[9]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 247.

[10]David Chapman to Glenn Smith, 11 July 1927, Box 25, File 0-32, RG 79, NA.

[11]Mark Squires to Plato Ebbs, 3 August 1927, NCNP, P, and FDC Papers, 1927-37, Box 18, NCSA; and Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, 28 December 1927, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 8, GSMNP Archives.

two years.[12]

However, the Park Service contended early on that these leases served a temporary purpose and that they intended to eliminate all private holdings inside the proposed park boundary. Secretary of Interior Hubert Work made this clear to Senator L.D. Tyson in an April 1928 letter. Work pointed out the difficulties that the Park Service had experienced in dealing with inholdings in western parks and firmly declared that "the policy of the Department, and the intent of Congress is to eliminate all private holdings in our national parks." Work further explained that the Park Service had made provision through the lease process in those cases where "hardships might be imposed upon some of the old-timers who have been on their homesteads for years and who might have difficulty in orienting themselves elsewhere." Work emphasized, however, that the Park Service would not grant leases indiscriminately, but only in cases that they had "specially investigated and proven meritorious."[13]

Purchases of individual tracts began in earnest in the spring of 1928. Letters from purchasing agents indicate that many people sold willingly to the park commissions, although some priced their land much higher than commission appraisers. G.W. Cole wrote to David Chapman concerning his contacts with landowners in Cocke County: "The people are very nice with me in every way, the only trouble I have is the high prices they are putting on their property, lots of them."[14] Both park commissions attempted to avoid paying high prices in the early going for fear of setting precedents that would

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[12]"Acts of Congress Relating to GSMNP."

[13]Hubert Work to L.D. Tyson, 19 April 1928, Box 306, File 604, RG 79, NA.

[14]G.W. Cole to David Chapman, 23 June 1928, GSMCA Papers, Box VII, File 10, GSMNP Archives.

prompt other landowners to raise their asking price. David Chapman warned Blount County land buyer John Clark about this: "I have had many disturbing reports brought to me about the prices your men are paying for land. . . . It seems that all of the people down in the Cove [Cades Cove] know about the prices up in the hills."[15]

On other occasions, however, commission land buyers gave people higher prices if they cooperated and proved willing to help with getting their neighbors to sell. Land buyer John Jones urged G.W. Cole to accept an offer from a Mr. Maddron in Cocke County: "The price looks high, but when fellows act as nice as he has about his, I do not think we should 'split hairs' on a deal." Maddron got his asking price because of his willingness to help with land purchases in the area and the fact that he knew practically everyone in the area and "stands well" in the community.[16]

Although this engendered good will from those who benefitted from the practice, it also led to accusations of favoritism and partiality from those who did not. Mrs. William Hall of Cataloochee wrote to Horace Albright complaining that land buyers for the North Carolina Park Commission "never mentioned condemning the holdings of those they have a liking for." One well-connected family had received three thousand dollars more than the original amount offerred by the park commission and a lease on their land. Mrs. Hall asked Albright to try to get the commission "to trade with us at the figures mentioned that we may not have further trouble."[17] Mrs. Hall also wrote to Representative Jonas

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[15]David Chapman to John Clark, 18 May 1928, GSMCA Papers, Box VII, File 9, GSMNP Archives.

[16]John Jones to G.W. Cole, 16 July 1928, GSMCA Papers, Box VII, File 10, GSMNP Archives.

[17]Mrs William Hall to Horace Albright, 4 January 1930, Box 306, File 604, RG 79, NA.

complaining that land buyers practiced political favoritism: "The park commission pays the Democrats more and gives them raises as much as three thousand dollars at once on their property. And they won't talk to a Republican."[18]

The personality of individual land buyers often had a major impact on the willingness of landowners to sell. L. Woody, who had family in Cataloochee, complained to Governor O. Max Gardner of one land buyer who, he alleged, had "told lies after lies about the park." He argued that this individual's dishonesty, mistreatment of people in the community, and his squandering of funds resulted in a great deal of ill will against the Park Commission and caused people to withhold their land.[19]

The strongest opposition to attempts to purchase individual farms came from residents of Cades Cove who possessed the richest, most fertile farm land in the Smokies. In 1927 David Chapman wrote to Arno Cammerer arguing, "I think the most difficult situation will be Cades Cove. A great many people want to sell, but quite a few do not."[20] At one point someone erected a threatening sign in Cades Cove:

COL. CHAPMAN YOU AND HOAST
ARE NOTFY LET THE COVE
PEOPL ALONE GET OUT GET
GONE 40M LIMIT[21]

One cove resident sent a letter to local papers questioning: "Our ancestors fought in the

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[18]Mrs. William Hall to Representative Jonas, 16 December 1929, Box 308, File 609, RG 79, NA.

[19]L. Woody to O. Max Gardner, 12 March 1931, Gardner Papers, Box 82, NCSA.

[20]David Chapman to Arno Cammerer, 3 May 1927, Box 1100, File 601, RG 79, NA.

[21]A picture of this sign can be found opposite page 92 in Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*.

American revolution. Have we no right to life, liberty, HOME and happiness? Fresh warm blood from Cade's Cove redeemed the soil of France to make the world safe for Democracy--must Cade's Cove submit to Kaiserism?[22]

Some of the residents of the Cove wrote to prominent individuals encouraging them to use their influence to keep the Cove out of the Park. Walter Gregory wrote to John D. Rockefeller, Jr.: "It was the Rockefeller money that made the park a reality. Without it the park would have been a failure. We most respectfully ask, beg, and implore you to request the park people to leave us outside the park area or you will withdraw the Rockefeller donations."[23] John Oliver wrote to Hubert Work that forcing the people of Cades Cove to leave their homes "would be a crime which our national government would be ashamed of."[24]

Cove residents, especially John Oliver, who had many contacts with individuals who had stayed in his lodge in Cades Cove, encouraged influential outsiders to write letters to have the Cove excluded from the park. Mary Rolfe of Champaign, Illinois wrote to Horace Albright saying that she "was shocked that in the name of the National Park Movement such wrongs should be committed." She accused the leadership of the Tennessee Park Commission of allying themselves with Cades Cove moonshiners in buying up land outside the Park boundaries "where they felt sure that they can best ply their trade," and threatened to tell the story to "some newspaper man who cares nothing for the National

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[22]Wright, *Great Smoky Mountains National Park*, 57.

[23]G. Walter Gregory to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 18 June 1928, Box 306, File 604, RG 79, NA. Mrs R.D. Burchfield sent an identical letter to Rockefeller, found in the same file.

[24]John Oliver to Hubert Work, 20 April 1928, Box 306, File 604, RG 79, NA.

Park Service."[25] Others echoed these sentiments and encouraged the Park Service and the Tennessee Park Commission to eliminate the Cove from the park.[26]

Some individuals in the park movement argued for leaving Cades Cove out of the park, or for just buying from those that wanted to sell and allowing the rest to keep their land and homes for "atmosphere." David Chapman talked on several occasions about the possibility of eliminating Cades Cove from the park area.[27] The Park Service, however, insisted on keeping Cades Cove inside the park as they planned to turn it into the largest developed area on the Tennessee side.[28] As for allowing individuals to keep their land inside the Park, Arno Cammerer argued: "Any lands they would have been permitted to hold in fee simple would within a very short time have passed into the hands of those with money who desired a homesite within the park, and the old-timers would have sold out to those who would in the first place not have been considered at all."[29]

This insistence that Cades Cove remain within the park, however, did not deter Cove resident and community leader John Oliver from seriously challenging the Tennessee

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[25]Mary A. Rolfe to Horace Albright, 19 April 1929, Box 305, File 501-04, RG 79, NA.

[26]Other writers included George H. Browne and Mrs. H.T. Bailie both of Cambridge, Massachusetts, see Box 308, File 609, RG 79, NA; and Condemnation:Tennessee, Box III, File 2, GSMNP Archives.

[27]Acting Secretary of the Interior to David Chapman, undated but apparently in the late summer of 1927, Box 306, File 604, RG 79, NA; and David Chapman to Ben Hooper, 17 July 1928, GSMCA Papers, Box VIII, File 2, GSMNP Archives.

[28]Arno Cammerer to George H. Browne, no visible date, but probably March 1930, Box 308, File 609, RG 79, NA.

[29]Arno Cammerer to Mary Rolfe, 4 May 1929, Box 305, File 501-04, RG 79, NA.

Park Commission and threatening its ability to condemn land for park purposes. Oliver, a member of the Cove's oldest family, owned over three hundred acres of land in the Cove, owned and operated a tourist lodge and tourist cabins on his property, served as a rural mail carrier, and pastored the Primitive Baptist Church in the Cove. Initially, Oliver had supported the idea of creating a national park in the Smokies as a way of creating revenue and employment for Cove residents and protecting the surrounding forests. However, when it became apparent that the Park Service planned to include the Cove in the proposed park, Oliver became its chief opponent in the Cove.[30]

Both the Park Service and the Tennessee Park Commission knew that Oliver's leadership in the Cove would cause other Cove residents to resist selling their land. In order to break down this opposition the Tennessee Park Commission decided to file a condemnation suit against Oliver in July 1929.[31] Oliver and his lawyer fought back, challenging the Park Commission on a number of constitutional and technical issues. It took three years and five court proceedings, two of them appeals before the Tennessee Supreme Court, before the courts decided the basic constitutional issues in favor of the Tennessee Park Commission. The July 1932 Tennessee Supreme Court decision effectively closed the door on further constitutional challenges filed by homeowners in the Smokies and ended the possibility of preventing the state from condemning their homes. John Oliver's fight, however, continued for two more years and three more court appearances as the courts determined the fair market value of his property.[32]

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[30]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 221-54.

[31]David Chapman to A.E. Demaray, 19 September 1929, Box 306, File 604, RG 79, NA; and Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 349.

[32]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 249-50.

Oliver received $17,000 for his land plus $807.51 in interest, although he had earlier valued the property at over $30,000 and had offered to sell for $20,000. His court battles reportedly cost him $5000 in attorney fees.[33]

Ironically, in the midst of these extended court battles Oliver made numerous inquiries about future employment with the Park Service in the park. He seemed especially concerned that he would lose his mail route and retirement benefits from the Postal Service as Cove residents moved out. No offer came from the Park Service, however, primarily due to bitter feelings by many inside the Service who felt that Oliver had unnecessarily delayed the park project.[34] The Park Service did hire Oliver's son-in-law, Charles Dunn, as Assistant Chief Park Ranger in 1931.[35]

After the conclusion of the final case Oliver asked permission from the Park Service to remain on his land, paying rent to the Park Service. Several individuals in the Park Service and the park movement urged that Oliver be given no consideration because of his long-standing opposition. Park Superintendent Ross Eakin wrote to Horace Albright: "I hope he will not be given a lease even if he continues to carry the mail. The Cades Cove situation can be charged to him and he would always be a source of trouble for us."[36] David Chapman echoed these sentiments: "It is unfortunate that those who have

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[33]J.W. Cooper to Arno Cammerer, 30 July 1936; and J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 29 August 1931, Condemnation:Tennessee Papers, Box III, File 3, GSMNP Archives.

[34]Arno Cammerer, "Confidential Memorandum for Director Albright," 11 March 1931, Box 306, File 603, RG 79, NA.

[35]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 177.

[36]J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 17 October 1931, Condemnation:Tennessee Papers, Box III, File 3, GSMNP Archives.

fought the Park hardest have gotten the most for their property. To let Oliver stay on under the circumstances will lose the respect of the natives for the Park Service and the Park Commission."[37] Despite these expressions, the Park Service granted Oliver a series of one-year leases and he remained in Cades Cove until December 25, 1937 when he removed his belongings from the Cove.[38]

Although Oliver's fight undoubtedly inspired some homeowners to resist and questions lingered concerning the legality of condemnation for park purposes, most sold their property to the Park Commissions in the late 1920s. By the end of 1929 the Tennessee Park Commission had purchased almost half of the farms in Cades Cove.[39] In October 1929 Horace Albright reported to Secretary of Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur that "most of the individual mountaineer holdings have been acquired."[40]

Individuals sold for a variety of reasons. Some saw a chance for a new life and new opportunities outside of the mountains and readily sold. However, by this point in time most of the individuals living in these mountain communities lived there because they liked the lifestyle and the close ties of their community. Most had had earlier opportunities to leave but had adapted themselves to the difficulties of life in the mountains. Many of these individuals became resigned to the fact that the government would eventually get their land, and with the lease agreements they could stay, at least

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[37]David Chapman to Arno Cammerer, 23 June 1934, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 16, GSMNP Archives.

[38]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 254.

[39]Ibid., 251.

[40]Horace Albright, "Memorandum for Secretary Wilbur," 31 October 1929, Box 302, File 204-020, RG 79, NA.

temporarily. In many cases these individuals received generous rental terms, especially if they sold willingly, were not "antagonistic to the Park", and helped with fire protection.[41]

On the other hand, the Park Service dealt rather harshly with those whom it considered "antagonistic" or who forced the park commissions to condemn their property. It forced many of these individuals to vacate their homes immediately after the courts reached a judgement. In some cases exceptions were made, especially in the case of mail carriers like John Oliver or Postmaster Beck of Smokemont, who reportedly caused "all of the North Carolina Park Commission's troubles at Smokemont." In these exceptional cases the Park Service charged the individuals full rental value for their property.[42]

Prices paid for the land varied and those who held out, like John Oliver, often got better prices. Cataloochee resident Lloyd Caldwell explained the situation: "Now some of 'em did get better prices 'n others but that was their own good luck by havin' sense enough to know what to do. Them that jumped to conclusions quick an' sold quick was the ones that I call it gettin' cheated. They just let them land buyers out talk 'em, some of 'em."[43]

Those who decided to stay on their land soon discovered that life as a leaseholder differred dramatically from life as a landowner. The terms of the leases prohibited

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[41]David Chapman to J.R. Eakin, 26 December 1930, Box 308, File 609, RG 79, NA; and J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 14 August 1931, Box 307, File 604, RG 79, NA.

[42]J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 14 August 1931.

[43]Lloyd Caldwell, Interview by Sam Easterly, July 24, 1973, transcript, GSMNP Archives.

leaseholders from cutting timber, digging for herbs and roots, building new structures, grazing animals, hunting, or manufacturing, selling, or possessing alcohol. Lessees agreed to fight fires and to allow Park service personnel access to the premises at all times. If residents violated the terms of the lease, the Park Service could evict them with no appeal allowed.[44] One resident voiced his frustration over these restrictions: "They tell me I can't break a twig, nor pull a flower, after there's a Park. Nor can I fish with bait for trout, nor kill a boomer, nor bear on land owned by my pap, and grandpap and his pap before him."[45]

Poor communication between the park commissions and the National Park Service, and the eagerness of both to gain good will among the mountain people, gave some of the lessees the idea that they could stay on their land for life. Once the Park Service began supervision of park land in 1930, however, superintendent Ross Eakin made it clear that lifetime leases would be given only "in part consideration of the purchase price." Eakin did qualify this statement by asserting that "for humane reasons elderly people, and perhaps others may stay in the park the remainder of their lives providing the premises are not needed for development."[46] Unfortunately, anxious park commission land buyers had assured many residents that they would be able to lease their property for life, and Arno Cammerer and Horace Albright had made speeches in the region

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[44]Copy of lease agreement in Box 308, File 609, RG 79, NA.

[45]Thornborough, *The Great Smoky Mountains*, 154.

[46]J.R. Eakin to David Chapman, 15 October 1931, Land Acquistion Papers, Box XV, File 1, GSMNP Archives.

implying the same.[47] When the Park Service unexpectedly forced them to move many residents became increasingly embittered toward the Park Service and the park commissions.[48]

Park Service officials and members of the park commissions tried to keep tensions down as much as possible as treatment of the mountain people became an increasingly explosive political issue, especially in Tennessee. Jim Wright and other wealthy land owners in the Smokies used the "plight of the mountain people" to gain a public relations advantage over the Tennessee Park Commission, and particularly to picture their arch enemy David Chapman as a cruel and uncaring individual.[49] Bruce Keener, one such land owner, wrote a letter to the Rockefeller Foundation pointing out that the "picturesque people of the Smoky Mountains are being driven out of their native land by the high handed methods of the Smoky Mountain Park Commission."[50]

These attacks became especially strong when Tennessee Governor Henry Horton began making appointments for the Tennessee Park Commission in the late summer of 1932. This criticism served to discredit Chapman and other members of the Commission in some circles and provided Horton with an excuse for replacing most of the old Commission. Luke Lea's newspapers circulated a highly critical article by T.H.

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[47]W.R. Mize to David Chapman, 13 October 1931, Land Acquisition Papers, Box XV, File 1, GSMNP Archives.

[48]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 251.

[49]The best example of this tactic is Jim Wright's, *Great Smoky Mountains National Park.*

[50]Bruce Keener, Jr. to John A. Ferrell, 25 August 1931, LSRM, Series 3, Box 13, Folder 147, RAC.

Alexander, an individual who had been evicted from the park for squatting in a cabin on Jakes Creek, soon after Horton appointed the new commission. Alexander condemned the "progress" that had forced the mountain people from their homes. The progress that had "swapped the log cabin of the mountain man for a filling station, the ancient tub mill for a hot dog stand and the mountain man himself for the squawking tourists of Massachusetts."[51]

In order to defuse this explosive issue the Park Service and park commissions tried to exercise tolerance toward the mountain people and treat them humanely. This especially became an important issue as the Depression deepened and individuals could neither afford to move out of the park nor pay their rent. Park superintendent J.R. Eakin wrote to Horace Albright about such a situation in the Greenbriar section that involved several families. Eakin argued: "It is unthinkable that we should eject them during this period of unemployment." He also pointed out that putting destitute individuals out of the park would give David Chapman's enemies "a real point of attack."[52]

Depression banking conditions produced a situation in which many mountain residents developed a deep hostility toward the park and the Park Service. Upon selling their land many families put their money in local banks. In the early 1930s practically all of the banks in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina, in the words of former Park Ranger Audley Whaley, "went bursted." These unfortunate individuals now had neither land nor money. Many of these people, their families, and friends naturally blamed the

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[51]J.R. Eakin to Arno Cammerer, 3 September 1932, Box 313, File 870.1, RG 79, NA.

[52]J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 9 February 1932, Box 308, File 609, RG 79, NA.

coming of the park for their misfortune.[53]

Another issue inherent in the removal of families and communities from the park that produced further confusion involved the status of cemeteries in the park. Many families that owned land that contained family cemeteries hesitated to sell until they had some sort of guarantee that they would retain access to those cemeteries and that the Park Service would not disturb these sacred sites. In 1932 Horace Albright issued a statement that guaranteed families and churches the right to keep their cemeteries cleared of briars and brush, allowed them to continue to bury family and church members in these cemeteries, and promised the help and cooperation of the Park Service in keeping the the sites as neat as possible. Albright concluded: "These cemeteries, or God's acres, are sacred places for those who have buried their loved ones there, and it will be a privilege to cooperate in safeguarding them."[54]

The purchase of church property created another highly sensitive situation that the Park Service and the park commissions had to deal with. Churches held a tremendous amount of importance for residents of Smoky Mountain communities both as places of worship and as the centers of community life. As such members often found it difficult to part with their churches. Although the Park Service offered leases to many churches and avoided condemning church property because of the bad public relations, they sometimes appeared insensitive to the strong feelings of "church people." Arno Cammerer wrote to David Chapman concerning the purchase of some church property in 1931: "In all our national park contacts we find that church people are the most

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[53]Audley Whaley, Interview by William Alston, 30 July 1975, transcript, GSMNP Archives; and Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 252.

[54]Horace Albright to W.H. Woodbury, 16 April 1932, Land Acquisition Papers, Box XV, File 2, GSMNP Archives.

difficult to deal with. They have no public vision and are a most selfish crowd. I think you are most wise, however, in settling with them."[55]

Most churches disbanded as their membership moved away. The Primitive Baptist Church in Cades Cove, however, refused to disband and held regular services until the 1960s. The location of this church in an area that the Park Service wanted to develop forced the church to fight in the courts to gain the right of yearly leases to maintain the property.[56]

Other churches experienced difficulty in agreeing on terms to sell their property. The unfortunately named Friendship Baptist Church had a major controversy over the sale of its church property. The church property had been donated by the William Stinnet family and the deed stated that the property would revert to the Stinnet family when the congregation ceased to use it for church purposes. The Park Service agreed to split the purchase price between the church trustees and Stinnet, with Stinnet getting the church building. Stinnet initially agreed, but then decided that he wanted the church bell and the pews. Before a deal could be signed Stinnet got angry with the church for having meetings once a year "for the sole purpose of depriving him of his property," and demanded all of the furnishings, the building and all of the purchase price. This action forced the Park Service to file condemnation proceedings so that the courts could clear up the problem.[57]

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[55]Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, 21 May 1931, Box 1100, File 601, RG 79, NA.

[56]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 253-54.

[57]John O. Morrell, "Big Greenbriar Cove, Sevier County, Tennessee: Showing Necessity for Condemnation Proceedings," Land Acquisition Papers, Box VI, File 5, GSMNP Archives.

The Park Service practice of burning or tearing down vacant buildings stirred the anger of many former residents of the Smokies. The Service argued that individuals used these buildings for "moonshining and other immoral purposes," and that they presented a fire hazard.[58] However, for many former residents of the Smokies the destruction of their former homes, businesses, churches, and schools proved to be the final insult. As Durwood Dunn observed, "having destroyed the community of Cades Cove by eminent domain, the community's corpse was now to be mutilated beyond recognition."[59]

The treatment accorded wealthier individuals who owned vacation and development properties in the Smokies, however, caused the most bitterness among many former residents of the Smokies. Because they could afford skilled attorneys these individuals often received high prices and generous lease agreements on their property. A special arbitration board awarded Jim Wright over $70,000 for property appraised by the State of Tennessee at $17,000.[60] These individuals also possessed the financial resources to wait out the Park Service and the park commissions until they got the price or terms they wanted. In addition, after cynically using the plight of the "mountaineers" to build up sympathy for their cause, many of these individuals collected excessive awards from local juries. The influential Whittle family of Knoxville received a jury award of $9000 on properties appraised at $2500 by the National Park Service. To make matters worse the land had been purchased after 1925

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[58]J.R. Eakin to Luther Flynn, 14 September 1931, Box 308, File 609, RG 79, NA.

[59]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 256.

[60]Arno Cammerer, "Memorandum for Secretary Ickes," 14 May 1935, Box 2012, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

when everyone in East Tennessee knew that the land was to be turned into a national park.[61] In the mind of Justice Department attorney J.W. Cooper the Whittles made the purchase solely "for the purpose of speculating on the price of lands after it was known that the Park had been established."[62]

The treatment accorded members of the Appalachian Club and Wonderland Club in the Elkmont area especially galled many poorer residents of the Smokies. Wealthy Knoxvillians formed the Appalachian Club in 1910 and the Wonderland Club in 1914 as resort communities. Powerful connections to prominent Tennessee politicians enabled club members to have club property excluded from the Tennessee Park Commission's power of condemnation. This forced the Tennessee Park Commission to make generous concessions to the clubs in order to gain title to the properties. As a result club members sold their property for one-half its appraised value in exchange for lifetime leases. With Park Service consent many cottage owners conveyed ownership of their property, prior to selling to the Tennessee Park Commission, to their minor children thereby appreciably extending the life of the lease. Through various means the clubs got the Park Service to extend their leases for twenty additional years in 1950 and again in 1971. In the meantime, many leaseholders sold their leases, using a loophole in park regulations that allowed transfer of leases to other club members.[63]

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[61]A.E. Demaray, "Memorandum for the Acting Secretary," 30 December 1938, Box 3816, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

[62]J.W. Cooper to the Attorney General, 3 May 1939, Box 1079, File 120, RG 79, NA.

[63]Morell, "A Brief History of the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs;" and Arno Cammerer, "Memorandum for Colonel Chapman," 10 March 1930, Box 313, File 901, RG 79, NA.

Finally, after sixty years, the Park Service forced residents of Elkmont to leave their cabins on December 31, 1992, despite an offer of $770,000 in cash to help build a new park visitors' center.[64] The bitterness of former residents of the Smokies toward these privileged few came out in reactions elicited by the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*. Cades Cove native Dr. Randolph Shields argued that these individuals enjoyed "privileges that other people are not enjoying." He lamented the fact that he could move back into Cades Cove only as a resident of the Cades Cove Methodist Church cemetery. Carl Whaley argued: "They got money and some way the government let them live there. We had none. There isn't a thing fair about it."[65]

However, the Park Service did not force all of the poorer residents of the Smokies to move. Some of the elderly residents of the Smokies stayed on their property until their death. The five Walker sisters of the Little Greenbriar section provide the best example of life-long residency in the Park. The Walkers did not sell their property to the Park Service until 1941, as the Park Service hesitated to pressure them or take them to court because of the potential for adverse publicity or an extremely high jury award.[66] Over time the Walker sisters became a tourist attraction, especially after the *Saturday Evening Post* wrote an article about them in 1946. The sisters supplemented their income by selling souvenirs to those curious to see people living "as mountaineers did 100 years ago," until 1953 when only two sisters survived. These two wrote the Park

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[64]"Cabin Fervor: Elkmont Debate Pits Family vs. Public Use," *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 19 April 1992, 1.

[65]"Ex-residents Want Special Deal Ended," *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 3 May 1992, B2.

[66]Newton Drury, "Memorandum for the First Assistant Secretary," 23 November 1940, Box 1128, File 610, RG 79, NA.

Service requesting that rangers remove the sign directing tourists to their cabin as "we are not able to do our Work and receive so many visitors, and can't make sovioners [sic] to sell like we once did and people will be expecting us to have them."[67]

The families forced to move from the Smokies had mixed experiences. Some moved to nearby areas such as Pigeon Forge, Townsend, and Wears Valley, Tennessee or to Maggie Valley, Bryson City, Waynesville, or Iron Duff, North Carolina. Others traveled farther afield. Several families moved as far away as California, Oregon, and Washington and two families moved to Alaska.[68] One family from Greenbriar experienced tremendous difficulty in getting settled. First they moved to the area around Norris, Tennessee, but the building of the Tennessee Valley Authority's Norris Dam displaced them once again. They moved from Norris and bought a farm near Oak Ridge, Tennessee only to be displaced for a third time by the federal government during World War II when the Manhattan Project came to the region. They finally moved back to the Pigeon Forge area, where at least they could live in sight of the Smokies.[69]

In evaluating the displacement of residents of the Great Smoky Mountains we face a different set of fictions. Most published accounts of the establishment of the park tend to gloss over the removal of families from the Smokies. One of the first works to deal with the establishment of the Park, Laura Thornborough's *The Great Smoky Mountains*, portrays removal as a great opportunity for the "land poor farmers who sold their

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[67]National Park Service, Division of Publications, *At Home in the Smokies: A History Handbook for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, North Carolina and Tennessee* (Washington: U.S. Department of Interior, 1984), 123-27.

[68]Map "Where They Went," GSMNP Archives.

[69]Glenn Cardwell, Interview by Author, 21 March 1995.

farms and bought valley farms nearer the larger cities." Thornborough quotes one farmer as saying: "The Park sure helped me. I've got a farm now that I can plow and raise more and get better prices. No more hoeing. Why farming is a pure pleasure."[70] Although Michael Frome, in *Strangers in High Places*, mentions that for some residents of the Smokies the "park was uninvited, unwelcome, and 'plumb foolish'," he too down plays any disruption that removal from their homes may have caused the mountain people.[71] In *Birth of a National Park*, Carlos Campbell also dismisses any hard feelings about the displacement of people. In responding to hostile signs posted in Cades Cove, Campbell argues: "The attitude expressed in the grim warning sign soon passed." In summing up the removal of people from the park, Campbell concludes: "The establishment of a national park, like the building of a hydroelectric dam or other large scale project, unavoidably imposes on a few for the benefit to the whole public."[72]

Just as these accounts misrepresent the removal of individuals from the Smokies by trivializing the experience, recent observers have tended to romanticize the lives of the people of the Smokies and overdramatize their removal. Some recent accounts picture residents of the Smokies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as living some sort of edenic existence, characterized by self-sufficiency, egalitarianism, independence, stability, and democracy. In this view of Appalachian people, "familism, rather than the accumulation of material wealth, was the predominant cultural value of

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[70]Thornborough, *The Great Smoky Mountains*, 154-55.

[71]Frome, *Strangers in High Places*, 195.

[72]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 92-99.

the region, and it sustained a lifestyle that was simple, methodical, and tranquil."[73] This view of life in the Smokies has caused observers to picture the removal of the mountain folk as the story of a people violently driven from their tranquil, pre-industrial existence into a hostile, dog-eat-dog industrialized world for which had little preparation. Indeed, one historian recently equated the displacement of people from the Smokies with the forced removal of the Cherokee Indians from the Smokies in the 1830s.[74]

The recent research of Crandall Shifflet provides a much different picture of life in the Smoky Mountains before the coming of the park. According to Shifflet, the southern Appalachian region was in the midst of a "population crisis" well before the coming of widespread industrial development. While the fertility rate in the United States as a whole dropped from 7.04 to 3.56 between 1800 and 1900, fertility rates in the southern Appalachian region remained much higher than the national average until the 1950s.[75] Durwood Dunn observed that in Cades Cove in the 1880s "six to eight children per family was average; fifteen was considered large, but not unusual."[76] This high birthrate put tremendous strain on the economic resources of the region. Mountain residents compounded the hardship through the custom of dividing the land equally among

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[73]Ronald Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982), 38.

[74]Brown, "Power, Privilege, and Tourism."

[75]Shifflet, *Coal Towns*, 13-15.

[76]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 79.

all male heirs.[77]

As a result of this high birthrate, by the twentieth century existence for most families in the region proved quite precarious. To keep body and soul together and feed their large families farmers in the Smokies had two options, either adopt an itinerant lifestyle searching the countryside for available work, or seek a variety of local work to augment the often meager farm income. Heads of the households and older sons sought additional funds by hunting, fishing, blacksmithing, working in a timber camp, mine, or textile mill, building railroads or highways, or making moonshine whiskey. As Shifflet has argued: "Mountain farmers who lived on the margins of economic security pursued a patchwork of activities in piecing together the family economic quilt."[78]

Anecdotal evidence and population statistics provide support for Shifflet's argument on the decreasing viability of life in the Great Smoky Mountains by the early twentieth century. Florence Cope Bush's mother Dorie Cope provides an excellent picture of the life of those mountain families that chose itinerancy. Dorie's life is a story of constant moving in order to maintain family economic viability. Dorie's father moved their family from a farm near the Cherokee Indian Reservation, to Spartanburg, South Carolina to work in a textile mill, to a farm in Tennessee near present-day Gatlinburg, and to a variety of timber camps owned by the Little River Lumber Company. When Dorie married Fred Cope the pattern continued with back-and-forth moves from farm to timber camp; another attempt at life in a milltown, this time Gastonia, North Carolina; and finally a move to Knoxville, Tennessee. This constant movement between farm, mill,

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[77]Shifflet, *Coal Towns*, 13-15.

[78]Ibid., 15-16.

timber camp, mine, and city characterized the lives of many mountain families.[79]

Others chose to remain in the Smokies by developing a number of skills and taking on a variety of jobs to supplement their farm income. In Greenbriar, Glenn Cardwell's father secured additional income by serving as a "jack leg" mechanic.[80] Even John Oliver, who owned some of the best farmland in Cades Cove, felt the need to supplement his farm income by carrying the mail, pastoring the Primitive Baptist Church, and running tourist cabins and a tourist lodge.[81]

The declining population of the region reveals the increasing difficulty of economic survival and the attractions of outside employment in the early twentieth century. The population of Cataloochee township, which had peaked around 1900 at 1251, had declined to 931 by 1920.[82] Likewise the population of Cades Cove had declined from its high of 709 in 1900 to 600 in 1928.[83]

Like all myths the ones concerning the displacement of people from the Great Smoky Mountains have their basis in fact. For many of the people of the Smokies whose economic lives had become increasingly precarious, the coming of the park provided an economic godsend. They had cash money with which to buy new land at a time of low land prices. Despite the Depression, the economic environment of the region--the coming of the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the expansion of

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[79]Bush, *Dorie*.

[80]Glenn Cardwell, Interview by Author, 21 March 1995.

[81]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 221-40.

[82]Givens, "Cataloochee and the Establishment of the GSMNP," 59.

[83]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 179 and 251.

industrial opportunities at Champion Fibre, the Aluminum Corporation of America, and other regional industries, and the rapid development of the tourist industry--provided numerous opportunities to supplement, or even replace, farm income.

On the other hand the forced removal of the people of the Smokies, particularly the emotional impact on the people of the Smokies, had its tragic aspects. These people lost not only their homes, farms, churches, and businesses, but lost their communities. When they left their homes they became separated from many of the community, church, and kinship ties that had become so important over their lifetime. Many never quite recovered from this loss. Glenn Cardwell recalls that later in his father's life all he wanted for his birthday was to be taken back into Greenbriar to revisit the grown-over sites where he, his family, and friends had lived, worked, worshiped and played.[84] The park commissions and the National Park Service could never compensate the people for this loss of community, just as the people who were removed could not re-create it elsewhere.

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[84]Glenn Cardwell, Interview by Author, 21 March 1995.

CHAPTER 12

PLAYGROUND OR WILDERNESS?

Although federal laws authorizing the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park forbade development of the Park until North Carolina and Tennessee had turned over 427,000 acres, the National Park Service took over "protection and administration" of the property soon after the states presented the deeds to the first 150,000 acres in 1930. In the process of administering the steadily increasing amount of property that composed the park, the Park Service encountered a variety of challenges as it attempted to transform farmland and timberland into a national park. This novel experience made development of the park a testing ground for the National Park Service as the Great Smokies became "the first park of any magnitude for which plans will be fully considered by engineers, landscape architects, naturalists, foresters, historians, sanitation and administrative experts, before development is undertaken."[1] Although the process never quite reached this level of organization and planning, in the course of this process the Park Service set a number of important precedents that would determine the direction of development not only in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park but also in national parks all over the country. Indeed, development decisions made in the Smokies helped initiate a debate within the Park Service and among the American people over whether the primary mission of the national parks should be to preserve wilderness or to provide tourist services.

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[1]Text of speech, "Prepared for Director Albright for possible use at Asheville, Jan. 28, 1932," Box 302, File 204-020, Rg 79, NA.

The ever-increasing number of visitors to the park soon made the Park Service's job an increasingly difficult one. In 1930, the first year of its existence, an estimated 200,000 people visited the Park.[2] By 1938 the number of annual visitors had risen to 694,634.[3] In August 1930 the Park Service sent two experienced rangers, John Needham and Phillip Hough, to make an inspection tour and determine the most pressing needs of the new Park.[4] Ross Eakin, who had been appointed as Park Superintendent earlier, assumed his official duties in January 1931.[5] Eakin established the first park headquarters at the Maryville post office but moved it to Gatlinburg on June 1, 1932. By 1932 Eakin added two more rangers to the force, but the task of protecting over 300,000 acres of mountain land with a force of four proved daunting.[6]

The implementation of Park Service regulations in the Smokies provided the first major challenge for the rangers. Enforcement of the regulation forbidding hunting in the park proved especially troublesome. Ranger Audley Whaley maintained that the people who lived in and around the park were used to "doin' as they pleased . . . they hunted and fished whenever they got ready." Some seemed determined to continue to do what they had done despite--and even to spite--the Park Service. Whaley arrested one old coon

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[2]J.R. Eakin, "Memorandum for the Director," 23 December 1930, Box 1081, File 201-006, RG 79, NA.

[3]*Nashville Banner*, 15 October 1938.

[4]Arno Cammerer, "Memorandum for Mr. Needham and Mr. Hough," Box 302, File 204-010, Rg 79, NA.

[5]Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 96-97.

[6]J.R. Eakin, "Proposed Great Smoky Mountains National Park," Box 302, File 207-001.2, RG 79, NA.

hunter whom he had already caught hunting several times. The old man told Whaley: "I've always lived up here. Born and raised up here. An' I've hunted it an' fished it an' I'm goin' to as long as I live. You may catch me, but I'm goin' to hunt it."[7]

Despite the importance of the enforcement of this regulation, Park Service officials encouraged the rangers to deal with these situations with tact and sensitivity. Arno Cammerer warned John Needham to go slowly on the enforcement of the regulation on carrying firearms in the park: "This is almost second nature to the mountaineers and I don't think you will be able to do much except warn them when you find them with guns on park property until we have acquired the entire interior area for the park."[8] Audley Whaley agreed with this go slow policy with recalcitrant individuals in the park: "I knew that you can't run over 'em. You can't tell 'em what to do. You've got to say 'let's do so an' so if we can't get by this now we've got to, it's a reglation [sic] now we've got to do it now.'"[9]

The practice of individuals digging up shrubs and wildflowers in the park caused another early enforcement problem for rangers. In 1931 Gatlinburg hotelier, Jack Huff warned Park Service officials that he had seen individuals hauling truckloads of shrubs out of the park almost every day. Although the Park Service tried to deal severely with individuals taking truckloads out of the park, they again went slowly in enforcing the regulations on individuals who had only a few wildflowers or plants. For one thing, in

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[7]Audley Whaley, Interview by William Alston, 30 July 1975, transcript, GSMNP Archives.

[8]Arno Cammerer to John Needham, 17 September 1930, Box 302, File 204-020, RG 79, NA.

[9]Audley Whaley, Interview by William Alston.

the early days of operation the person caught with plants could always argue that they had taken the plants from an area not yet included in the park. Second, the Park Service had no effective way of enforcing their regulations until the federal government assigned a federal commissioner to the Park to prosecute cases. Park Service employees had to depend on U.S. Commissioners in the surrounding counties or charge individuals with violating Tennessee or North Carolina laws and take the violators into state courts. Neither scenario proved totally satisfactory, as local courts and commissioners often sided with the violators over the Park Service, making convictions difficult.[10] In speaking of the plant issue, Superintendent Eakin lamented that "our efforts along this line are mostly bluff."[11]

Fire protection became one of the chief responsibilities for the early rangers in the park. Although fires in the Smokies do not have the same explosive potential that fires in the western parks have, several local factors contributed to making the Smokies a high risk area in the 1930s. The presence of huge amounts of slash and dead brush left over from logging operations made several areas of the park highly susceptible to fire.[12] The customs and traditional practices of people who lived, or had lived in the Smokies exacerbated the situation. Mountain residents traditionally burned off the underbrush to improve forage for cattle.[13] The custom of "smoking out bee trees" in order to "rob"

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[10]Arno Cammerer to Mrs. C.W. Edge, 22 October 1938, Box 3815, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

[11]J.R. Eakin to David Chapman, 7 May 1931, Box 312, File 715-04, RG 79, NA.

[12]J.R. Eakin to J.D. Coffman, 11 June 1931, Box 313, File 871, RG 79, NA.

[13]Eakin, "Proposed GSMNP."

the honey also created fire problems. With large amounts of slash on the ground these fires often got out of control.[14]

Arson, a common means of retaliation against powerful individuals or institutions, became the Park's most serious fire problem in the early days. Audley Whaley related that those he arrested for violations of park regulations often threatened: "We'll burn this place down."[15] Cases of individuals who set fires because of anger at the Park Service or at individual rangers fill several file folders. One case in 1932 occurred because Park Rangers forced an individual whom they considered a "very objectionable character" to move out of the Park. The man retaliated by setting fourteen separate fires along one particular trail.[16] In 1937, Lone Bales of Gatlinburg set twenty-nine separate fires which burned over twenty-three acres because he had a personal grudge against a ranger.[17] Later in that same year Boone Dykes entered a plea of *nolo contendere* to a charge of feloniously setting fires in the park, pleading drunkenness and loss of memory.[18]

The establishment of the Civilian Conservation Corps greatly assisted Park Service officials in providing adequate fire protection for the park. Between 1933 and 1942,

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[14]Arno Cammerer to John Needham, 17 September 1931.

[15]Audley Whaley, Interview by William Alston.

[16]J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 27 January 1932, Box 303, File 302, RG 79, NA.

[17]B.B. Smith, "Memorandum for the Solicitor," 29 January 1937, Box 3816, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

[18]B.B. Smith, "Memorandum for the Secretary," 18 December 1937, Box 3816, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

twenty-two separate CCC camps functioned in the Smokies. At the peak of enrollment, 1934-35, 4350 young men worked in the park area. CCC workers constructed fire towers, built fire roads to improve access to the backcountry and act as fire breaks, and reduced fire hazards by removing slash and tearing down and removing abandoned buildings.[19]

Although removal of abandoned buildings sometimes proved controversial, park officials believed it a necessary task. They argued that these buildings presented a fire hazard. In addition, the removal of these buildings prevented people either from moving back into the Park or squatting--"deserted houses are rallying points for the lawless element"--improved the overall appearance of the park and helped restore the wilderness character of the Smokies. The Park Service sold many of the buildings inside the park at auction, with the buyer guaranteeing clean-up of the site. Rangers burned less accessible or less desirable buildings and saved only the "best examples of pioneer architecture."[20]

Clean-up of other building sites caused the Park Service major problems. The site of Champion Fibre Company's Smokemont mill, for example, proved especially difficult to deal with. The clean-up of this site involved removal of an obsolete locomotive, forty railroad cars used for hauling logs, frames and carriages used in the sawmilling process, a number of large buildings and homes, and several miles of railroad track. The sale contract did not provide for clean-up of the site by Champion, so the Park Service had to

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[19]Charlotte Pyle, "CCC Camps in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," April 1979; and Walter Miller, "The Civilian Conservation Corps in East Tennessee and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, 1933-1942," December 1974, both papers in GSMNP Library.

[20]Eakin, "Proposed GSMNP;" and Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, undated, Box 302, File 204-020, RG 79, NA.

pay to have much of the metal hauled off and the buildings destroyed. They buried much of the smaller debris on site.[21]

Although the park rangers and the CCC spent much of their time trying to eliminate much of the evidence of human habitation, one major problem arose in Cades Cove due to the absence of human activity. Once the farmers of the Cove began to move out and take their cattle with them trees began to grow in the fields. Arthur Comey, chairman of the New England Trail Conference, wrote to Arno Cammerer that the Park Service needed to do something, as "we can no longer see the scenery for the trees."[22] The solution Comey advised, and the solution adopted, was to make an exception to Park Service rules and lease land in the Cove for cattle grazing in order to prevent the Cove from "growing up into a gigantic woodlot."[23]

The Park Service also had to deal with the problem of restoring animal life to the Smokies. Although early promotional literature had boasted of the abundance of wild animals in the Smokies, early surveys by Park Service personnel revealed that the many years of human habitation and the destruction of habitat by logging operations had seriously depleted the animal resources of the area. Department of the Interior official, Ernest Walker Sawyer, who made an inspection trip to the area in 1929, argued that "even song birds are not numerous." He credited the lack of animals in the Smokies to the "hundreds of mountaineers each roaming the mountains with a shot gun on his

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[21]Eakin, "Proposed GSMNP," and J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 9 July 1931, Box 311, File 631-1, RG 79, NA.

[22]Arthur Comey to Arno Cammerer, 21 August 1931, Box 306, File 602.1, RG 79, NA.

[23]Ibid.; and Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 255.

shoulder."[24] A local observer noted that "the fish have been dynamited, seined and caught in every possible way while the game has been killed in and out of season until there is scarcely any left."[25]

One of the first efforts made by the Park Service was to restore the deer population to the Smokies. Park Superintendent J.R. Eakin argued in 1931 that years of unregulated hunting and deforestation had left the park area devoid of deer.[26] At the same time a surplus of deer had caused serious damage to plant life in the nearby Pisgah National Forest. The Forest Service and the National Park Service made an agreement to restock the Smokies gradually with deer from the Pisgah herd, beginning with twenty-five in 1933, fifty in 1934, and one hundred each subsequent year until 1940.[27]

The announcement of this restocking program in the Smokies immediately drew criticism from some circles. Most feared the damage that deer would cause to the "varied and luxurious plant life" of the area. Protest grew especially strong when a March 1933 article in *American Forests* magazine showed pictures of the plant damage caused by deer in the Pisgah National Forest. At the same time the death by starvation of hundreds of deer in the Kaibab region of Grand Canyon National Park, due to overgrazing and the elimination of predator species, drew national attention. Superintendent Eakin

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[24]Ernest Walker Sawyer, "General Memorandum on Trip to the Smokies," Box 2012, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

[25]Clifford Bogle to H.P. Sheldon, 28 May 1930, Box 303, File 208-06, RG 79, NA.

[26]J.R. Eakin to Albert Ganier, 13 July 1931, Box 312, File 715-04, RG 79, NA.

[27]J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 30 March 1931, Box 312, File 715-04, RG 79, NA.

defended the stocking of deer by arguing that "trees and shrubs grow so prolifically the park could support a large population without damage." He also pledged that he would not institute a campaign to eliminate predators in the park, which, he argued, contributed greatly to the Kaibab disaster and the problems at Pisgah. Eakin won the battle and the deer program began.[28]

Depleted fish stocks in the park's streams and rivers also concerned Park Service officials. In an emergency measure, the Park Service closed six streams to fishing in 1932. Although initially resisted by Horace Albright as a "development measure," the Park Service also began to restock streams with the help of the Bureau of Fisheries and the Isaak Walton League.[29] After several years of discussions, the Park Service constructed a fish hatchery at the confluence of Kephart Prong and the Oconoluftee River in 1936.[30] After ten years of operation, however, the Park Service closed the hatchery after poor fish harvests made it a fiscal liability. Experts called in to study the situation attributed the low water temperature as the cause of the problem. After the closing of its fish hatchery, the Park Service purchased fish from other local hatcheries. The stocking program greatly improved fishing in the park and attracted fishermen from around the country, although concerns still exist over the depletion of native brook

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[28]J.R. Eakin to Albert Ganier, 13 July 1931, and J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, Box 1139, File 715-04, RG 79, NA.

[29]J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 8 August 1931, Box 303, File 208.06, RG 79, NA; and Eakin, "Proposed GSMNP."

[30]J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 30 January 1932, Box 310, File 620-30, RG 79, NA; J.R. Eakin to Arno Cammerer, 19 February 1934; and David Madsen to Conrad Wirth, 12 December 1935, Box 1132, File 620-30, RG 79, NA.

trout, due to the stocking of non-native rainbow and brown trout in Park streams.[31]

The coming of the national park also proved beneficial to the animal most associated with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the black bear. In 1935 J.R. Eakin reported that ten years earlier "bears were much depleted and rarely seen." With the end of hunting in the Smokies they now approached "numbers which they normally should have."[32] However, Park Service officials realized the potential for trouble with a large population of bears, and Arno Cammerer advised J.R. Eakin that "there is only one satisfactory way to deal with the bear problem and that is to remove the cause of the trouble, namely, to make food inaccessible."[33] Unfortunately, the presence of garbage due to the increase in human use of the park and the unwillingness of many visitors to abide by the rules and not feed the bears led to a persistent bear problem in some areas. The practice in some CCC camps of dumping garbage in the open in an attempt to attract bears so that the enrollees could be entertained by evening "bear shows" exacerbated the problem. J.R. Eakin expressed his consternation at this practice but lamented the difficulty of enforcing Park Service policies in remote camps "where the wildlife furnishes the principal diversions and topic of conversation."[34]

Just as the Park Service wanted to restore stocks of certain "desirable" animals,

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[31]Thomas J. Allen, "Memorandum of the Director," Box 1132, File 620-30, RG 79, NA.

[32]J.R. Eakin to Victor Cahalane, 24 July 1935, Box 1138, File 715-02, RG 79, NA.

[33]Arno Cammerer to J.R. Eakin, 1 July 1935, Box 1138, File 715-02, RG 79, NA.

[34]J.R. Eakin to Victor Cahalane, 24 July 1935.

some persons in the Service pushed for a program to control or eliminate certain "undesirable" species. J.R. Eakin especially wanted to allow rangers to hunt foxes, cats, and skunks which ate the eggs of quail, grouse, and wild turkeys. Eakin defended his viewpoint concerning foxes by arguing that an "unnatural condition" existed where fox hunters had turned several hundred foxes loose in the area so that they could course them.[35] Eakin also promoted an active program for the eradication, or at least control, of water snakes which fed on trout and other game fish. He argued that unless the Park Service controlled these water snakes they would "literally take our streams."[36] Eakin's attitude reflected the viewpoint of many who had served in the Park Service since its begining, a viewpoint that considered the primary mission of the National Parks as catering to the needs and desires of the visitors. He wanted to promote those species which would attract park visitors, even if it meant eradicating other less desirable species.

However, the philosophy inside the Park Service had begun to change, not only in its attitude toward wildlife but in its attitude toward its overall mission. By the 1930s many in the National Park Service began to argue that its mission should encompass "complete conservation" of all native plant and animal species in the national parks. These individuals gave a literal interpretation to the Park Service mission statement "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." Indeed, in denying Eakin's

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[35]J.R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 21 January 1932, Box 303, File 208-06, RG 79, NA.

[36]J.R. Eakin to Arno Cammerer, 15 October 1934, Box 1137, File 710, RG 79, NA.

request to begin a program to eradicate foxes, cats, and skunks, Assistant Park Service Director Bryant quoted the mission of the Service and underlined the word "unimpaired." Bryant continued that predator control could take place in the National Parks only in those situations "where property or life is endangered."[37] Even Arno Cammerer, a Park Service traditionalist like Eakin, responded to the request to "control" water snakes by arguing that such a policy "would be an undesirable subservience of national park purposes to the single aim of fish production."[38]

As much as the Park Service wanted to restore the Smokies to its "natural" state, it also had to somehow interpret the human history of the park. Even as people began to move out of the Park, pressure began to build to preserve some memory of the lives of the mountain people, especially since many believed that "this interesting group is apt to undergo a radical change from their old happy, satisfied way of living."[39] As early as 1930 Park Ranger Phillip Hough began collecting items from people as they moved from the Park which might be appropriate for a mountain culture museum. Hough encouraged the Park Service to vigorously pursue the collection of potential museum pieces for fear that with the "influx of tourist and relic hunters most of the choice material will soon disappear."[40] Influential outsiders, including Waldo Leland of the American Council of

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[37]Assistant DirectorBryant to J.R. Eakin, 19 January 1932, Box 303, File 208-06, RG 79, NA.

[38]Arno Cammerer to J.R. Eakin, 11 September 1934, Box 1137, File 710, RG 79, NA.

[39]George Smith, "Report of Trip to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park," 1931, Box 302, File 204-020, RG 79, NA.

[40]Ibid.; and Phillip Hough to Horace Albright, 17 September 1930, Box 302, File 204-010, RG 79, NA.

Learned Societies, also advocated a program to preserve the native culture of the region. Asheville folklorist, Bascom Lamar Lunsford, proposed that the Park Service bring together groups of mountain people to perform traditional songs, dances, and games "both to entertain visitors interested in such matters and to perpetuate as much as possible these cultural things."[41]

Although the Park Service soon resolved that it would make efforts to preserve the heritage of the former inhabitants of the park, it decided to perpetuate only those aspects of mountain life that reflected a "pioneer" lifestyle. Horace Albright reflected this view when he promised that the Park Service intended to "do all it can to preserve the traditions of these sturdy people, many of whom still use spinning wheels and handlooms to weave their cloth and who grind their grain in primitive mills built by their forefathers."[42] This also meant, as Durwood Dunn put it, that "anything which might remotely suggest progress or advancement beyond the most primitive stages should be destroyed."[43]

In 1938 the Park service commissioned H.C. Wilburn, resident landscape architect C.S. Grossman, and Park naturalist Arthur Stupka to conduct a study on how best to preserve the culture of the mountain people. The group called for the construction of a museum of mountain culture and a number of field exhibits scattered throughout the Park. They established a basic ground rule that the Park Service should preserve and

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[41]Waldo Leland to Arno Cammerer, 7 March 1935; and Bascom Lamar Lunsford to Waldo Leland, 6 March 1935, Box 1077, File 101, RG 79, NA.

[42]Horace Albright, "The South's First National Park," Box 305, File 501-04, RG 79, NA.

[43]Dunn, *Cades Cove*, 256.

present to the public only those things representative of mountain culture prior to 1890. They placed great emphasis on using live demonstrations by "mountaineers" of corn milling, long rifle shooting, leather tanning, domestic textiles, honey production, and even beaten copper work--"material used would be mainly from confiscated still copper." The group even made the proposal that the Park Service encourage some former residents to move back into the Park to live as their ancestors did in the nineteenth century, but soon realized the impracticality of this plan.[44]

In 1941 the Park Service conducted another study of the issue, this time by Hans Huth, a German expatriate, former curator of royal palaces and parks in Prussia and Berlin, and now a special consultant on historic preservation with the Park Service. Huth recommended that the park seek the aid of such groups as the Pi Beta Phi School in Gatlinburg, the Southern Highlanders Guild, Allenstand Cottage Industry, the Campbell Folk School, the Russell Sage Foundation, and Berea College for advice on effectively preserving and interpreting mountain culture. The possibility of consulting any actual residents of the Smokies in the interpretive process was never discussed. Huth further suggested the creation of an isolated "buffer" zone on the edge of the park which "could be kept and preserved by making it inaccessible and by discouraging intercourse with the outside world." In this zone families would live in the old way, making a living by making high quality handmade goods for sale in Park gift shops. If the Park Service could not find individuals proficient in these handicrafts, then the experts at Phi Beta

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[44]W.C. Wilburn, C.S. Grossman, and Arthur Stupka, "Report on the Proposed Mountain Culture Program for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," GSMNP Library.

Phi, Berea College or the Campbell Folk School could train them.[45]

Over time the Park Service has adopted a few of the recommendations from the two reports, all reflecting the Park Service bias toward only preserving the "primitive." In 1945 it designated Cades Cove as a "historical area" and restored several of the older cabins and barns. Later the Park Service constructed a pioneer homestead at the Oconoluftee Visitors' Center just outside of the Cherokee Indian Reservation. Concessionaires operate water-driven mills at both sites, and the Park Service sells cornmeal and stone ground flour at each site--although the meal and flour that are sold now are actually ground in Sevierville, Tennessee because of health regulations. At one time the Park Service held muzzle-loading rifle demonstrations at Oconoluftee, although Park Service employees debated whether the individual doing the demonstration ought to wear overalls or a Confederate army uniform. The Park Service has preserved other cabins and buildings scattered around the park. Almost all, except for a few in the Cataloochee area, reflect life in the Smokies before the twentieth century.[46]

The mountain culture museum has remained in the planning stages since the establishment of the Park. The hundreds of tub mills, spinning wheels, looms, long rifles, stills and other artifacts collected by H.C. Wilburn and C.S. Grossman over the years remain in storage at various buildings scattered throughout the park awaiting a museum that may never be built.

By the late 1930s restrictions against permanent development and the ever increasing number of visitors produced a dilemma concerning accommodations inside the

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[45]Hans Huth, "Report on the Preservation of Mountain Culture in Great Smoky Mountains National Park," August 1941, GSMNP Library.

[46]V. Ross Bender, "Living History in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," 1967, GSMNP Library.

Park. The increased flow of tourists, many of whom camped on the roadside, forced the Park Service to authorize the CCC to build temporary campgrounds with pit latrines. However, the overcrowded campgrounds soon produced a serious sanitation problem for the park. In 1937 the Park Service had to close two of these camp grounds because of contaminated wells, and rangers marked other water sources as "unsafe without boiling."[47] The situation also prompted complaints from visitors about the sanitary conditions and lack of modern "comfort stations."[48]

Although Superintendent Eakin publicly supported Park Service policy concerning development, he begged Director Cammerer to allow him to open two large permanent campgrounds which the CCC had already constructed complete with water and sewer lines. Eakin argued that the volume of travel expected in 1937 made sanitation improvements such as the construction of flush toilets and permanent water supplies "necessary for the protection of the health of visitors and those outside the park residing along the streams which head in the park."[49] Despite Eakin's pleas, however, the Park Service did not open the campgrounds until the official opening of the Park in 1940.[50]

The southern location of the park created an unique development and administrative problem for the Park Service: southern laws and customs that dictated racial

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[47]J.R. Eakin to Arno Cammerer, 27 July 1937, Box 1135, File 640, RG 79, NA.

[48]J.R. Eakin to John S. Beck, 28 September 1937, Box 3816, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

[49]J.R. Eakin to Arno Cammerer, 17 September 1937, Land Acquistion Papers, Box XV, File 7, GSMNP Archives.

[50]"Accommodations for Visitors Summary Sheet," 3 March 1939, Box 3791, File 12-0, RG 48, NA.

segregation in public accommodations. In discussing this situation with Secretary of the NAACP Walter White, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes argued that "it has long been the policy of this Department, in the administration of national parks and monuments in the west, to conform generally to the State customs with regard to the accommodation of visitors."[51] As such, in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park the Park Service designated separate restroom and campground facilities for African-American visitors. In defense of this policy Park Service Assistant Director A.E. Demaray argued: "We realize that there will be some criticism against segregation, but we also feel that we will be subjected to more criticism by the white as well as by the colored race if there is no segregation."[52]

Perhaps the most serious development issue within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park concerned the question of roads in the Park. Park Service Director Horace Albright expressed traditional Park Service policy on roads in the national parks in a letter to Harvey Broome in 1931:

> I view my future obligations in the development of that park with a great appreciation of the serious responsibilities involved to protect and guard as much wilderness as possible, at the same time making it reasonably accessible for the motorist. We may have to concede it a fact that by far the greatest number of people will see what they are permitted to see of this glorious mountain country from their motor car, and not by horseback or hiking. At any rate we will have to plan ahead for the enjoyment of the park by those who are not as strong and agile as you and I, for they too are entitled to their inspiration and enjoyment.[53]

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[51]Harold Ickes to Walter White, 4 February 1937, Box 3791, File 12-0, RG 48, NA.

[52]A.E. Demaray, "Memorandum for Superintendent Eakin," 9 September 1938, Box 3791, File 12-0, RG 48, NA; and "Accommodations for Visitors Summary Sheet."

[53]Horace Albright to Harvey Broome, October 1931, Box 310, File 630, RG 79, NA.

The Park Service received a great deal of pressure to build a wide ranging system of paved roads within the park from boosters in Western North Carolina and East Tennessee. Indeed, "Good Roads" advocates and automobile clubs in both states had provided major support for the park movement. Park boosters had often maintained that the establishment of a national park would finally bring good roads to these mountainous regions.

The Park Service also faced political pressure to build roads due to Depression unemployment, especially as emergency funds became available from the federal government through the New Deal. J.R. Eakin pointed this out to Director Albright in 1932 in discussing a movement launched by the Asheville Chamber of Commerce to build a skyline highway the entire length of the park. "I believe the Tennessee and North Carolina delegations in Congress will line up solidly behind this movement for things are in a bad plight in this country, as elsewhere."[54]

The debate over the proposed building of a skyline drive through the park became a particularly ticklish issue, as the Park Service had already begun construction of a skyline drive in Shenandoah National Park. Many local boosters saw the construction of a similar road through the Smokies as their right. However, the Park Service made it clear that the area east of the Indian Gap Highway--now Highway 441--would remain a wilderness with no paved roads through the area.[55] However, Park Service officials did not oppose the idea of a skyline drive through the western part of the park, and Park Superintendent J. R. Eakin, in particular, remained a staunch supporter of the project.

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[54]J. R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 16 February 1932,, Box 310, File 630 RG 79, NA.

[55]Horace Albright to Fred L. Weede, 18 February 1932, Box 310, File 630, RG 79, NA.

Eakin believed that the construction of a skyline drive in Shenandoah had created a "precedent from which we cannot escape, even if we desired to do so."[56]

As Park Service plans to build the skyline drive became public in late 1932, opposition from proponents of wilderness preservation began to mount. Harris Reynolds, Secretary of the Massachusetts Forestry Association, wrote to the Park Service warning them that "we must retain at all costs some real wilderness areas or our eastern parks will become merely enlarged municipal parks."[57] The Executive Board of the Izaak Walton League passed a resolution against any road building in the higher elevations of the Smokies.[58] Harlan Kelsey, a member of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission, pled with Albright: "There are plenty of national parks and state parks where the herd instinct can be fully satisfied but for God's sake let's keep our national parks, so far as we can, in a truly wild state."[59]

The Park Service moved quickly to answer these critics. Arno Cammerer responded that those not thoroughly acquainted with the situation had stirred up rumors. Reflecting his pro-development biases, he argued that the road would not follow the crest of the mountains except to the proposed observation area at Clingman's Dome, but would be built from gap to gap and would not include the eastern part of the park. He further

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[56]J. R. Eakin to Horace Albright, 16 February 1932, Box 310, File 630, RG 79, NA.

[57]Harris Reynolds to Arno Cammerer, 6 September 1932, Box 311, File 631-1, RG 79, NA.

[58]Horace Albright, "Memorandum for the Staff," 14 November 1932, Box 310, File 630, RG 79, NA.

[59]Harlan Kelsey to Horace Albright, 19 November 1932, Box 311, File 630, RG 79, NA.

asserted that the Park Service sought to develop the national parks for the "health and enjoyment of the people, not only for the young and husky . . . but also that the elderly people, the infirm and growing children may enjoy the hidden wonders of the park."[60]

In late 1932 and early 1933 the Park Service plan received some important endorsements. Both the National Parks Association and the locally influential Smoky Mountains Hiking Club voiced their approval. However, one member of the Board of Directors of the Hiking Club, Harvey Broome, voted against the measure.[61] Even Harlan Kelsey came to consider the skyline drive project unavoidable and even necessary.[62] In early 1933 the construction of a skyline drive through the western part of the park seemed inevitable.

However, local boosters and even some of the leadership of the National Park Service did not realize that, just as attitudes toward wildlife and plant life had changed within the Park Service and the Department of the Interior, attitudes toward development inside the national parks had also changed. Increasingly the preservation of wilderness became a priority, rather than an afterthought.

Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes led the way. Although Ickes had spent most of his adult life as an urban reformer in Chicago, he quickly came to develop an appreciation of the value of wilderness. On a 1934 trip to Yosemite Ickes mused: "One should get away once in a while as far as possible from human contacts. To contemplate

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[60]Arno Cammerer to Phillip Ayres, 6 December 1932, Box 311, File 630, RG 79, NA.

[61]Lorne W. Barclay to Horace Albright, 27 December 1932, Box 311, File 630, RG 79, NA; and E. G. Frizzell to Arno Cammerer, 20 January 1933, Box 1135, File 630, RG 79, NA.

[62]Harlan Kelsey to Horace Albright, 30 November 1932, Box 311, File 630, RG 79, NA.

nature, magnificently garbed as it is in this country, is to restore peace to the mind."[63]

At the same time other voices, both outside and within the Park Service, called for a more ecologically based management of the national parks or "complete conservation." In 1933 Park Service biologists George M. Wright, Ben H. Thompson, and Joseph S. Dixon issued a report on *Fauna of the National Parks of the United States*. The authors argued that "perhaps our greatest natural heritage . . . is nature itself, with all its complexity and its abundance of life."[64] Robert Marshall--the founder of the Wilderness Society--also worked in the Bureau of Indian Affairs at this time as Director of Forestry and served as perhaps the strongest advocate of wilderness protection within the Department of the Interior.[65] In the Forest Service, Aldo Leopold and Arthur Carhart advocated the preservation of more wilderness. In a memo to Leopold, Carhart argued that the primary problem for the Forest Service was how far to

> carry or allow to be carried manmade improvements in scenic territories, and whether there is not a definite point where all such developments, with the exception perhaps of lines of travel and necessary sign boards, shall stop. There is a limit to the number of lands on the shore line of lakes; there is a limit to the number of lakes in existence; there is a limit to the mountainous areas of the world, and in each one of these situations there are portions of natural scenic beauty which are God-made, and the beauties of which of a right should be the property of all people.[66]

By 1935 the increasing influence of these ideas within the Department of the Interior doomed the skyline drive project. In a June 1935 memo to Ickes, Robert Marshall

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[63]Fox, *John Muir*, 209.

[64]Alfred Runte, *National Parks*, 138-39.

[65]T.H. Watkins, *Righteous Pilgrim: The Life and Times of Harold Ickes, 1874-1952* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1990), 466-72.

[66]Ibid., 464-65.

argued that "a skyline drive, or additional fraction of it would be indefensible." He further reflected the new thinking of many in the Service by asserting "that it will be much easier to convert a wild area into a developed one in the future than wipe out development and restore wilderness."[67]

The skyline drive idea died hard, however, as Cammerer, now Director of the Park Service, encouraged Ickes to visit the site of the proposed road to judge the merits of the project. Cammerer reminded Ickes that elimination of the skyline drive project would handicap the work of a number of CCC camps in the park. He further advised Ickes that the road and trail program had received the approval of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, the Potomac Appalachian Club, and the Appalachian Trail Conference.[68]

Cammerer's appeal went unheeded, however, as Ickes pronounced the death knell for the skyline drive venture in September 1935 at a state park authorities meeting. At the same time he helped usher in a new era for the National Park Service and its relationship to wilderness:

> I am not in favor of building any more roads in the National Parks than we have to build. . . . This is an automobile age, but I do not have much patience with people whose idea of enjoying nature is dashing along a hard road at fifty or sixty miles per hour. I am not willing that our beautiful areas ought to be opened up to people who are either too old to walk, as I am, or too lazy to walk, as a great many young people are who ought to be ashamed of themselves. I do not happen to favor the scarring of a wonderful mountainside just so we can say we have a skyline drive. It sounds poetical, but it may be an attrocity.[69]

On the heels of Ickes's opposition to the skyline drive a further rationale for limited

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[67]Robert Marshall, "Memorandum for the Secretary," 9 June 1935, Box 1081, File 201, RG 79, NA.

[68]Arno Cammerer, "Memorandum for the Secretary," 15 July 1935, Box 2012, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

[69]Watkins, *Righteous Pilgrim*, 471-72.

development inside national parks evolved within the Park Service based on economic considerations. In 1938 when Tennessee's U. S. Senator Kenneth McKellar tried to reopen the skyline drive issue, Acting Department of the Interior Secretary E. K. Burlew responded: "If the park is made too accessible by roads, the tendency of tourists will be to race through it rather than to stay and enjoy it. From the standpoint of economic benefits to the surrounding communities, the Department and the National Park Service should be careful to see that it will not be possible for tourists to dash in and out and be on their way to some other resort area."[70]

The construction of trails in the park also sparked controversy. A major portion of the work of CCC enrollees involved the construction of an extensive trail system. Park Service guidelines called for the trails to be built "according to the highest standards," with grades not exceeding 15 percent at any point. The Park Service sought to "make readily accessible the most advantageous scenic points of the park."[71] However, proponents of wilderness, led by Harvey Broome, argued that the CCC made the trails too wide, that they planned too many trails, and that much of the trail construction unnecessarily destroyed the surrounding vegetation. Broome's consternation over the trail construction program prompted him to write Robert Marshall: "It was that wilderness which a half decade ago we were so eagerly seeking to bring under the protection of the Park Service, and which now some of us are just as eagerly seeking to protect from the Park Service."[72] Although the trail construction program continued,

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[70]E. K. Burlew to Kenneth McKellar, 3 June 1938, Box 3816, File 12-22, RG 48, NA.

[71]Albright, "The South's First National Park."

[72]Fox, *John Muir*, 210.

the watchdog efforts of Broome and others caused the Park Service and the CCC to consider the environmental impact of trail construction and use less intrusive methods.

The development controversy also carried over into discussions concerning the construction of lodges, hotels, and recreational facilities inside the park. Local boosters wanted the Park Service to build, or allow concessionaires to build, extensive and modern tourist accommodations. Wilderness promoters, however, focused more on keeping the park as unspoiled as possible, with a bare minimum of camping and sanitation facilities.

Local boosters envisioned many of the lodging and entertainment attractions that characterized the western parks. They longed for something akin to the "bear shows"--a boardwalk near the garbage dump, where tourists could observe the evening visits, and often fighting, of bears--and lighted eruptions of "Old Faithful" at Yellowstone, and the firefall and the Wawona Tunnel Tree at Yosemite. They also dreamed of grand lodges inside the park such as the Old Faithful Inn in Yellowstone, the Ahwanee Inn in Yosemite, El Tovar overlooking the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, and the Glacier Park Lodge in Glacier National Park.[73]

In 1935 the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association sent a list of proposals for development of the Smokies to Park Service officials. These proposals included an elaborate gateway complete with an avenue of flags, and an electric sign bridging the road emblazoned with the words "Welcome to Mankind"; a large amphitheatre with carillion and mission bells; statues scattered throughout the park honoring people involved in the establishment of the park; a museum commemorating the human history of the region; large-scale inn, lodge, and restaurant development; and the damming of Abrams Creek in

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[73]Runte, *National Parks*, 163-70.

order to flood Cades Cove and create a lake for recreational purposes.[74]

Horace Albright, now retired as Park Service Director, who had often promoted tourist development within national parks, responded that "most of these proposals do not appeal to me for the reason they would detract from the wild natural features of the region. . . . The great electric sign would particularly be an inharmonious feature." However, Albright did agree that the museum and the development of hotels and restaurants were "entirely in harmony with the principles and policies of the National Park Service and would be entirely proper in the glorious mountain region that is the Great Smoky Mountains National Park."[75]

The flooding of Cades Cove to build a lake 3.4 miles long and 1 mile wide proved the most controversial, and longest lived, of the boosters' proposals. This project had the additional enthusiastic support of Park Superintendent J. R. Eakin.[76] In order to get around Park Service policy against large-scale changes in the natural environment, Eakin and park boosters argued that the geologic record indicated that a lake formerly existed on the site. As David Chapman asserted: "I am told that some geologists say that you can locate the old lake line in the Cove. If this is true, it is not an artificial thing but simply a restoration of what nature did at one time."[77] This argument caused Cammerer to give his conditional support to the project in 1934. He argued: "In that hot country

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[74]Horace Albright to David Chapman, 3 April 1935, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 2, GSMNP Archives.

[75]Ibid.

[76]J. R. Eakin to Arno Cammerer, 15 August 1932, Box 312, File 650-01, RG 79, NA.

[77]David Chapman to Arno Cammerer, 2 December 1935, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 17, GSMNP Archives.

in particular any small body of water would not only be a charming and attractive feature in the landscape but would be of tremendous value in bringing back native birds and animals."[78]

As in the case of the skyline drive, oposition came quickly from proponents of wilderness protection. Park Service watchdog, and frequent critic, Robert Sterling Yard weighed in with his criticisms in the publications of the National Parks Association. Harvey Broome also responded when Tennessee Governor Gordon Browning gave his support to the project: "I cannot see the wisdom of annihilating the peculiar beauty and unparalleled vegetational ecology of Cades Cove and of reducing it to the somewhat nondescript status of an artificial lake."[79]

The changing attitudes within the Park Service and the Department of the Interior became increasingly evident as it became apparent that neither the lake project nor the development of lodge facilities would go through. In 1935 Arno Cammerer wrote to David Chapman: "The possibility of a lake in Cades Cove is definitely out. We have found no justification for this based upon our standards." Cammerer did, however, reflect his old leanings when he told Chapman that the Park Service might build some swimming pools.[80] By 1938 Cammerer had also given up on the idea of hotels within the Park. In a bit of creative remembering, but reflecting the new Park Service policy of encouraging tourist development outside the parks, Cammerer wrote to J. R. Eakin: "I

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[78]Arno Cammerer to Orpheus Schantz, 17 November 1934, Box 1135, File 650-01, RG 79, NA.

[79]Harvey Broome to Governor Gordon Browning, 31 May 1937, Governor Gordon Browning Papers, Box 8, File 7, TSLA.

[80]Arno Cammerer to David Chapman, 4 December 1935, GSMCA Papers, Box XI, File 17, GSMNP Archives.

have also always said that we would try to avoid placing hotels in the park, leaving that sort of installation to be supplied outside the boundaries."[81]

Even before the dedication of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in 1940 important precedents concerning development within the park had been set. To be sure, tight Park Service budgets due to the Depression and World War II played a role in preventing large-scale development. However, the changing climate of opinion within the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior made the Great Smoky Mountains the first national park to place a much greater emphasis on preservation of wilderness than on entertaining tourists. By 1938 even Arno Cammerer publicly promoted the philosophy of "complete conservation" in the national parks: "Our National Parks are wilderness preserves where true natural conditions are to be found. . . . When Americans, in years to come, wish to seek out extensive virgin forests, mountain solitudes, deep canyons, or sparsely vegetated deserts, they will be able to find them in the National Parks."[82]

The consequences of this changed attitude were great not only for the national parks, but for the surrounding region as well. Because the Park Service built no lodges or hotels, only campgrounds, most of the ever increasing number of visitors had to be housed outside the park boundaries. However, the lack of roads in the park dictated the placement of tourist development in the surrounding area. The gateways on the one major highway that crosses the park, the Cherokee Indian Reservation in North Carolina and Gatlinburg, Tennessee benefitted tremendously from this limitation on building

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[81] Arno Cammerer to J. R. Eakin, 9 May 1938, Box 1093, File 501-04, RG 79, NA.

[82] Runte, *National Parks*, 170.

roads and accommodations. Their location as "gateway communities" resulted in explosive, generally uncontrolled growth, and causes continued congestion at park entrances.[83]

The developmental policies of the Park Service also had other important consequences. The development of Cades Cove as a major tourist area led to the opening of a second major park entrance at Townsend, Tennessee. This, combined with the decision to build the park headquarters at Sugarlands near Gatlinburg, has led to ongoing accusations that North Carolina never got its fair share of park development. These voices grew louder as it became apparent that neither Haywood County nor Swain County in North Carolina would receive a major entrance and road connections into the park.

Indeed, the establishment of the park proved more detrimental than beneficial to counties such as Haywood, Swain, and Cocke County, Tennessee, as they lost large areas of taxable land and were bypassed by much of the tourist traffic. Swain County alone lost 169,711acres from its tax rolls, with a property valuation of $4,242,819.[84]

Despite the negatives of uncontrolled growth outside the Park boundaries, and the lack of growth in surrounding counties that did not get road connections, the new Park Service policy benefitted both the Smokies and the nation. Although the Smokies are plagued today by problems of dramatically reduced visibility due to air pollution, bumper-to-bumper traffic on the few roads inside the park, and the death of large stands of trees due to pollution and insect infestation, the park remains the largest wilderness area east of the Mississippi River. As important as the preservation of this

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[83]John G. Mitchell, "Legacy at Risk," *National Geographic*, October 1994, 35-36.

[84]Edward P. Moses to Mr. Horton, 12 July 1940, E. P. Moses Papers, The Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

large tract is, however, the new emphasis on wilderness protection inside the Park Service slowed the building of roads, lodges, and recreation facilities in the national parks and led to the preservation of millions of other wilderness acres around the country. Although the issue of priorities--between wilderness protection and visitor services--still prompts heated debate within the National Park Service, in Congress, and among the American people, the view that the primary mission of the national parks is the protection of wilderness has become increasingly important.

CHAPTER 13

CONCLUSION

The long anticipated dedication of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park finally came on September, 2 1940. A huge crowd gathered at Newfound Gap on the Tennessee-North Carolina line and a nationwide radio audience listened in. The dignitaries at the dedication included Governor Clyde Hoey of North Carolina, Governor Prentice Cooper of Tennessee, Arno Cammerer, David Chapman, Harold Ickes, and the keynote speaker President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Notable absences at the gathering included Mark Squires and Horace Kephart, who had died, and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who declined Harold Ickes's invitation to participate in the ceremonies. Unfortunately, due to the international situation and the upcoming election, President Roosevelt chose to speak on the importance of military preparedness: "We, in this hour, must have absolute national unity for total defense."[1]

However, in different times Roosevelt might have chosen to reflect on the strengths and success of the park movement. In the seventeen years between the beginnings of the movement and the dedication of the park supporters had overcome tremendous obstacles: raising over $10 million during difficult economic times, purchasing over six thousand individual tracts of land, overcoming the resistance of well-financed opposition, and weathering the storms of political battles and economic depression that threatened the movement at almost every turn.

In many ways the struggle to carve a national park from privately held hands, to

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[1]Text of the speech found in *Congressional Record*, 5 September 1940, 17492.

justify its inclusion in the national park system with arguments that spoke of biological diversity and the protection of virgin forests, and then to devote the bulk of that area to the preservation of wilderness made the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park the first major modern preservation project in the nation. Previously the federal government had established national parks--except for Acadia National Park in Maine, which was donated by a small group of wealthy philanthropists--by designating land already in the public domain as a national park, simply a transfer of jurisdiction. In addition, although initial Department of the Interior approval for the Smokies site came because of the scenic qualities of the mountains--the traditional criterion for inclusion in the national park system--promotion of the Smokies brought new justifications to the forefront of the national park movement such as the preservation of old growth forests and the setting aside of the declining number of wilderness areas. Finally, the Department of Interior's and National Park Service's decision to give priority to wilderness protection rather than the development of tourist services in the development of the park set an important precedent for future preservation projects. Alfred Runte has called the Great Smokies a "transition park" as it "anticipated the ecological standards of the later twentieth century."[2]

The movement to establish a park in the Great Smoky Mountains marks other important historical transitions as well. The participants in the park movement witnessed both the triumph of Stephen Mather's "See America First" campaign and the elevation of "business values" within the National Park Service and the decline of these ideas as Harold Ickes, Bob Marshall and others promoted the ideals of "complete

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[2]Runte, *National Parks*, 117.

conservation."[3]

The establishment of the park also represents a bridge between two great American reform movements, progressivism and the New Deal. The park had its beginnings in the progressive scenic preservation movement begun by John Muir and popularized by Stephen Mather and Robert Sterling Yard. The philanthropy of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and the Rockefeller Foundation were also firmly rooted in the progressive movement. The park movement was nurtured by business progressives of the 1920s in North Carolina and Tennessee such as David Chapman, Mark Squires, Austin Peay, and E.C. Brooks who saw the coming of a national park as the key to the economic development of their region. When the Great Depression threatened to make local and state efforts futile, New Dealers stepped in to insure the completion of the park demonstrating the increased presence and influence of the federal government in the South and the southern Appalachian region.

Although these transitions sometimes delayed the park project--especially when both park commissions fell victim to political transitions in North Carolina and Tennessee--they also brought together powerful forces that helped insure the ultimate establishment of the park. Indeed, in order to overcome the massive hurdles inherent in such a large and politically charged project park supporters were able to forge an effective coalition of public and private forces. The booster mentality of groups like the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association in Tennessee and Great Smoky Mountains, Inc. in North Carolina gave the movement tremendous enthusiasm and helped sell the idea and the benefits of a national park to the people of East Tennessee and Western North Carolina.

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[3]Ibid., 82-137.

The enthusiasm generated by these groups also helped to insure and maintain the support of politicians in the region. No politician who desired votes in East Tennessee or Western North Carolina dared to challenge the park movement openly after 1925, and many realized tremendous political benefits because of their active support. From its beginnings park supporters sought bi-partisan support, and although geography dictated that the bulk of political support would come from Democrats, the contributions of Republican U.S. Representatives Henry Temple and J. Will Taylor proved especially important in the early days of the movement when Republicans dominated national politics. The support of politicians on the national and state level gave the movement credibility and at least part of the financial resources necessary to complete the project.

The financial aid given to the park movement by the Rockefeller family saved the project, especially as expenses rose due to unexpected legal costs and revenue decreased as the Great Depression caused people to default on their pledges. The ongoing interest of the Rockefeller Foundation also helped as its prodding, its considerable influence at every level of society and government, and its determination to see the movement through to its completion kept the project moving ahead.

The executive branch of the federal government, particularly the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service, also played a crucial role in the movement. On several occasions government officials stepped in to provide guidance, a "jump start" when the movement stalled, and prevented over anxious boosters from turning the Smokies into a giant "playground." Stephen Mather initiated the whole movement with his interest in expanding the national park system into the eastern United States; Arno Cammerer played the leading role in selling the Smokies project to Congress, served as "point man" for the project within the National Park Service, initiated contact with John D. Rockefeller, and sold him on the project; Horace Albright negotiated the

settlement with Champion Fibre Company; Franklin Roosevelt issued an executive order to provide desperately needed federal funding; and Harold Ickes provided the guidance to turn the Smokies into a model of wilderness preservation.

The coalition used economic, aesthetic, biological, and even religious arguments to create a broad-based popular movement. In building support for the movement park boosters sought to include every segment of society, a fact reflected in the diversity of contributions, from the pennies of school children, to the dollar bills of bellhops, to the thousands of dollars of Western North Carolina and East Tennessee elites, to the millions contributed by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Indeed, the proactive nature of the movement to preserve the Great Smoky Mountains as a national park and significant popular involvement gave the thousands who participated in the movement a sense of collective ownership, an intense desire to protect the Smokies from those who would destroy its natural beauty and a willingness to see the project through to completion.

To be sure the park movement also had its weaknesses and shortcomings. The economic boosterism that characterized much of the promotion of the park seems excessive, silly, and far out of line with current environmental thinking. However, in the long run these arguments helped involve many people in a major environmental effort who probably would not have become involved otherwise. In addition, the collaborative nature of the movement insured that economic interests would not dominate the development of the park, although the park has provided significant economic benefits to some segments of the surrounding region.

The treatment of the people who were displaced by the coming of the park represents the nadir of the park movement. In their haste to establish the park and in their tunnel vision park supporters failed to see the genuine pain that these people felt in the loss of their homes, businesses, churches, and communities. The preferential treatment

accorded elites who owned vacation properties in the Elkmont area magnified this pain. Some of the wounds suffered by these people will never heal, although few of the former residents of the mountains survive.

Like most modern environmental projects, the fight for the Smokies proved exceptionally complex and troublesome. Indeed, the seventeen year project strapped its supporters on an emotional roller coaster alternating victory celebrations in the streets with frustrating delays and numbing defeats. However, the public/private partnership created by park supporters gave the Smokies movement tremendous resiliency, and an ability to withstand setbacks that would have sidelined the efforts of any one group. With this cooperative effort public agencies and private groups provided a tremendous service to the nation: establishing a national park that maintains a crucial wilderness area, provides recreational opportunities and enjoyment for millions of Americans, and at the same time yields important economic benefits for the region.

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